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The Mennonite Quarterly Review

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EDITORIAL

THE ATTACK ON CHRISTIAN NONRESISTANCE FROM CONSERVATIVE THEOLOGICAL quarters draws its material largely from the Old Testament. The God who commanded wars in the Old Testament and established capital punishment after the flood, so we are told, cannot have changed His ethics and established nonresistance as the way of life for the Christian under the new covenant. The argument has often been made, but perhaps never has the attack been pressed so vigorously as in recent years. It requires a thoroughly sound and convincing answer. Such an answer is possible, and has been given at various times and from various points of view. The Anabaptist answer four centuries ago (and the Anabaptists were constantly attacked with the Old Testament argument against war) was primarily to say that the Old Testament has been superseded by the New, and that Christians live under the rule of Christ and the covenant of grace, not under the Old Testament law. In his article on "Peace and War in the Old Testament" in this issue, Professor Hershberger gives the Anabaptist answer, and in addition gives a satisfying explanation, based on thorough loyalty to the complete revelation of God in both Testaments, of the wars of the Old Testament in terms of a basically unchanging God operating in a world of wicked men and with men who fail to keep His covenant. There may be other solutions to the problem of the wars of the Old Testament but the solution here proposed has probably never been so cogently and convincingly stated.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE SERVICE (CIVILIAN PUBLIC SERVICE) FOR CONscientious Objectors in the United States and Canada as an alternative to military service in the present war has seemed to some to be an altogether new thing in the history of the relations of church and state, particularly in the history of nonresistant groups. But this is not the case. Apart from minor instances, a major instance which forms an almost perfect parallel to Civilian Public Service in the United States, is the state service provided for the nonresistant Mennonites of Russia, beginning with the year 1880 and continuing until the World War. Little of a scholarly nature has been published on this important topic in the English language. Jacob Sudermann, professor of German at Goshen College, himself born a Mennonite in Russia, has taken the first long step toward a comprehensive scholarly study of this material by presenting in his article in the current number of the REVIEW a translation of the chief documents relating to the establishment of Mennonite state service in Russia in the years 1870-1880, together with a general account of the background and early history of the movement. Although he brings the story down to 1917, Professor Sudermann does not profess to give an exhaustive account of the most interesting topic. The REVIEW hopes to publish such an account in an early issue.

ONE BY ONE THE FORGOTTEN AND ALMOST LOST LEADERS OF EARLY SWISS ANAbaptism are being rescued from oblivion by modern research. A few years ago Pilgram Marpeck was recovered as an outstanding elder and writer, the "Menno Simons of the South," and exhaustive studies were published for the first time in English by John C. Wenger in the REVIEW. The REVIEW is happy to present in this issue the first English material on Leupold Scharnschlager, a close coworker for some years with Marpeck. The article on Scharnschlager by Gerhard Hein which appears in the current number, is brief, but presents all the extant data on this important character.

THE
Mennonite Quarterly
Review

Vol XVII No. 1

PEACE AND WAR IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

GUY F. HERSHBERGER

Christian nonresistance is a way of life in obedience to the will of God. The Christian, sincerely desiring his own life to correspond with the "divine order of things," turns to the Scriptures. Here he finds the living God, making known His will in the sacred pages of revelation. Then, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Christian seeks to shape his own life in accordance with the divine will.

It is true, of course, that people differ in their understanding of the Scriptures. Earnest Christians, even, do not always see alike on all its teachings. On the doctrine of nonresistance, especially, there is difference of opinion. This is due in part to the apparent difference between the Old and the New Testaments. It is the writer's belief, however, that this difference between the two Testaments is only a seeming difference, due to a superficial interpretation. He sincerely believes that the entire Scripture, carefully read and correctly understood, will show the Old and the New Testaments to agree that the way of peace is the way for the child of God; that war and bloodshed, retaliation and the spirit of revenge, have no place in the life of the Christian.

How then shall we regard the Scripture? The writer accepts the Old and the New Testaments as the inspired Word of God. He regards them as an integrated revelation of God's nature and of His

divine will. They give man all that he needs to know of his own nature, of the consequence of his sin, and the way of salvation. In its historical aspect, the entire Scripture is the story of God's experience with the human race from the creation of man to the time of Christ and the founding of the Christian church. This revelation of God's will was a progressive one, consisting of two covenants, the one found in the Old Testament and the other in the New. Under the new covenant the people of God have been given more light than they had under the Old. This does not mean that God's will has changed from age to age. It simply means that because of the sinfulness of man it was not possible to make His will as clear under the old covenant as it has been made under the new covenant through the redemptive work of Christ on the cross. For this reason God expects more of Christians in the gospel era than was achieved by Israel in the days before the gospel.

We owe a great debt to the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, because it was these founders of the Mennonite Church who made clear this very point. John Horsch puts it this way: "They believed indeed that all Scripture was given by inspiration of God and is inerrantly true in all its statements and doctrinal teachings. Nevertheless they recognized the fact that the relation of the Old to the New Testament Scriptures is that of promise to fulfillment, of type and shadow to reality, of the groundwork of a building to the building itself."[1] The Anabaptists made much of God's covenants with His people, first the old and then the new which superseded the old. They pointed out that God, through the prophet Jeremiah,[2] had promised a new covenant; that the writer to the Hebrews had declared the new covenant "a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second."[3] The Anabaptists saw that on certain points Christ had definitely set aside the old covenant.

What then do the two covenants have to say about war and bloodshed, retaliation and strife? When we examine the old covenant we find that in it God gave His people a law of three distinct parts: 1. The fundamental moral law as found in the ten commandments. 2. The civil law with its many ordinances designed for the needs of the people at the time when Moses gave them. 3. The ceremonial

[1] John Horsch, *Mennonites in Europe.* (Scottdale, Pa., 1942), 354.
[2] Jer. 31:31-34. [3] Heb. 8:6-7.

law, regulating the worship of God by Israel. A comparison with the New Testament then shows that under the new covenant the civil and ceremonial laws of the old covenant were set aside or modified, since for various reasons they were no longer satisfactory. But the fundamental moral law was never changed.

Jesus frequently referred to the ten commandments, implying that they were necessary for all time; and on one occasion He summed them up in two great laws. 1. "Thou shalt love thy God," and 2. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[4] The central point in the law, therefore, is love: love for God and love for one's fellow men. This law of love is the foundation of the doctrine of nonresistance, and it is the same under the old covenant as it is under the new. The sixth commandment says: "Thou shalt not kill."[5] This commandment emphasizes the sacredness of human life and personality and is in full accord with the apostle John of the new covenant who says: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."[6] Jesus Christ also taught this way of love by the word of His mouth and the example of His life. Even in His death on the cross, in which He paid the penalty for the sins of mankind, He demonstrated the law of love: "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps . . . Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not."[7]

When we examine the Scriptures we find many examples and admonitions on the nonresistant way of life in the Old Testament as well as in the New. When there was strife between the herdsmen of Abraham and Lot, Abraham took the way of love and peacefully divided the land between them.[8] When the envious Philistines stopped Isaac's wells, Isaac did not take revenge but in a Christlike spirit moved on to other grounds.[9] When Joseph was sold into Egypt by his jealous brothers, and after he rose to the position of second ruler in the land, he did not deal with them in the spirit of vengeance, but in the true nonresistant way returned good for evil.[10] In the book of Exodus we find this command: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again."[11] Proverbs says: "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat;

4 Mark 12:30-31, Jesus quoting Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18.
5 Ex. 20:13. 6 I John 3:15. 7 I Pet. 2:21, 23.
8 Gen. 13:7-12. 9 Gen. 26:12-33. 10 Gen. chapters 42-45.
11 Ex. 23:4.

and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink."[12] On one occasion, through a miracle at the hand of God, Elisha the prophet took a Syrian army captive and then in the spirit of nonresistance fed the men and sent them home.[13]

From this evidence it is clear that the doctrine of love and nonresistance is found under the old covenant as well as under the new. At this point we must remind ourselves, however, that there is not only a love of God but also a "wrath of God." This doctrine of the wrath of God also exists under the old and the new covenants. The psalmist in the Old Testament, addressing Jehovah, says:

> Thy hand will find out all thine enemies;
> Thy right hand will find out those that hate thee.
> Thou wilt make them as a fiery furnace in the time of thine anger;
> Jehovah will swallow them up in his wrath,
> And the fire shall devour them.[14]

The apostle Paul in the New Testament speaks no less certainly of "the wrath of God . . . revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness."[15] God is a holy God, and His holiness can not tolerate sin. Therefore His wrath goes out against all sin and unrighteousness.

Misunderstanding of the principle of nonresistance is often due to a misunderstanding of two other questions: 1. How does God's moral law work? 2. Is the Christian an agent for the execution of God's wrath? We shall answer the two questions together as we proceed. The operation of the moral law is graphically portrayed in the judgment scene of Matthew 25 where God rewards those who exercise love toward their fellow men and punishes those who manifest no love. From this account it is clear that there will be rewards and punishments in the future life and that it is God who administers them. It should be remembered, however, that not all rewards and punishments are reserved for the future. In the operation of the moral law there are also rewards and punishments in this life, here and now. For the most part these consist simply of man reaping the natural consequences of his own conduct. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."[16] This may be thought of as a sort of natural law of cause and effect. If a man treats his neighbor with kindness, for example,

[12] Prov. 25:21. [13] II Kgs. 6:8-23. [14] Psa. 21:8-9.
[15] Rom. 1:18. [16] Gal. 6:7.

he receives kindness in return. If he manifests hatred and ill will, he receives these in return, unless his neighbor in this case happens to be a nonresistant Christian.

By this law the deeds of men bring their own reward or punishment. Even though God loves the sinner and even though the Holy Spirit strives to bring him to God, if man deliberately chooses to go on in sin God will not, except possibly in special cases, interfere with the law of cause and effect to prevent him from suffering for his sins. On the other hand we should not think of the wrath of God as necessarily bringing a special immediate assignment of suffering to a given individual at a given point. This may happen in special cases, of course. But as a rule God allows the unrepentant sinner to have his way until he suffers the natural consequence of his own wrongdoing. God punishes sin by simply letting it go and allowing it to suffer its own consequences. He may, if occasion requires it, intervene in a special way, as when he prevented the hosts of Pharaoh from capturing the fleeing Israelites at the sea.[17] But ordinarily He does as Paul says in the epistle to the Romans. He gives men "up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting,"[18] until eventually they reap what they have sown.

It should also be remembered that under the law of cause and effect, that which comes as a consequence or punishment for sin is frequently sin itself. The book of Genesis tells the story of Cain and Abel. When Cain killed his brother God said, "A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth."[19] This Scripture is sometimes thought of as a direct and immediate judgment of God, as if He deliberately drove Cain out of his home country to punish him. But a more satisfactory interpretation would seem to be that God was simply telling Cain how the law of cause and effect works in a sinful human society. Cain had chosen to commit murder and the natural consequence was that his sinful fellow men would not tolerate him any longer. If they had been regenerated children of God they would have acted above the law of cause and effect. They would have been governed by the higher moral law and returned good for evil. They would have manifested a spirit of nonresistance in the manner of those who "walk after the Spirit."[20]

But they were sinners, and so they treated him in the only way that the natural man who "walks after the flesh"[20] can treat an

[17] Ex. 14:23-31. [18] Rom. 1:28. [19] Gen. 4:12.
[20] Rom. 8:4.

enemy, and cast him out. If they could have laid hands on him, they would have put him to death. So if he would save his life he must flee to the wilderness and live as a fugitive. When God interfered directly in Cain's case it was not to punish, but to save him: "And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him."[21] The natural consequence of Cain's deed in a sinful society was for men to cast him out and kill him, if they could lay hands on him. God is the author of this law of cause and effect, and this is the way it works in the human nature of sinful society. But we must remember that when the law operates, and men punish the act of the murderer, they also sin in meting out the punishment. They are simply performing the normal function of members of a sinful society.

In Genesis 9:5-6 this point is illustrated further. Here God says: "At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." That is, God requires every man to respect the life and personality of his fellow man. If a man violates this requirement he must suffer the consequences. Unless the murderer repents it will mean punishment in the life to come. But in any case, by the law of cause and effect, if a man commits murder the natural consequence will be for sinful members of his sinful society to kill him. This is the only way God's law of cause and effect can work in a sinful society, but it must be remembered that those members of society who take the murderer's life also commit sin in doing so. In this Scripture some writers find the divine establishment of government and the authorization of capital punishment. This interpretation is no doubt correct if we think of government with its powers of coercion as the logical and orderly working out of the law of cause and effect. That is, sinful society has found it necessary to deal with the offender in an orderly, organized manner.

We must remember, however, that in the ten commandments and in the teachings of Christ, God has given the fundamental moral law for the Christian who is not ruled by the passions of the natural man. This revealed moral law is above the natural law of cause and effect, just as the man of the Spirit is above the natural man. And this higher law says: "Thou shalt not kill." Therefore he who takes a human life, even if he acts legally as an official of the state, is violating the will of God for His own people. The avenger plays a part in

[21] Gen. 4:15.

the operation of the natural law of cause and effect which requires that men suffer the consequence of their own sin. But the act of human vengeance itself is in violation of the higher moral law and is therefore also sin.

The Christian is subject to the higher moral law. Therefore, he cannot serve as an agent for the execution of God's wrath. This prerogative belongs to God alone. Paul states this truth in a striking way when he says: "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God; for it is written, vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord."[22] The New Testament in all its teachings holds firmly to this standard, and so does the fundamental moral law of the Old Testament. It is only the civil law of the old covenant that descends to the lower level of vengeance and retaliation, and from the sayings of Jesus it is clear that this way had been permitted only because of the sinfulness of Israel, its "hardness of heart."[23] Jesus also makes it clear that under the new covenant which He had come to establish the Christian must live up to the higher standard.

In the fifth chapter of Matthew, for example, Jesus deals with six specific moral questions: The taking of human life, adultery, divorce, the taking of oaths, revenge, and the attitude of the individual toward an enemy. He states the requirements of the civil code under the old covenant in regard to each of these issues and then, with the words, "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time . . . but I say unto you," He sets aside the old requirement and in its place puts a new command on a level with the higher moral law. In doing so Jesus declares His purpose to be the fulfillment of this higher law. "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfil."[24] Thus by His word of authority Jesus restores human conduct to its original place in God's moral law.

The early Anabaptists constantly stressed the idea that the new covenant was superior to the old. Pilgram Marpeck, their greatest theologian, said that the old covenant was only a shadow of the real covenant which came with Christ; that under the old covenant there was no full forgiveness of sins, no real spiritual blessings, no com-

22 Rom. 12:19. In Rom. 13:4 Paul calls the civil ruler "an avenger of wrath to him that doeth evil." Here Paul is describing the function of the state in a sinful society for the carrying out of the law of cause and effect. The Christian dwells above this level, however, and lives according to the higher law of love.

23 Matt. 19:8. 24 Matt. 5:17.

plete possession of the Holy Spirit. All of these had to await the advent of Jesus Christ who inaugurated the new covenant with a full and complete atonement for the sins of man. In one place Marpeck says: "The forgiveness of yesterday [old covenant] . . . left all men, believing and unbelieving, under the law, the curse, sin and death until Christ. . . . Today [new covenant] for the first time is there real forgiveness, taking away, canceling and forsaking of sin."[25] In the old covenant there was a promise of spiritual blessings. Under the new covenant this promise is fulfilled. And with these blessings the Christian is expected to live according to the ethical teachings of the new covenant which has superseded the old. Under the old covenant, as found in the Mosaic code, Israel chastised its disobedient members with the sword and death, but the Christian church under the new covenant may do so only with the word of God and the sword of the Spirit.

> Today [there is] . . . another law, which is not a carnal law . . . as that of yesterday, but a . . . law or commandment of the Spirit,—love and patience, which God "yesterday" promised and "today" for the first time wrote in the hearts. . . . Also that they should love all people, not merely their friends or dear ones, but also their enemies, and not to resist evil, as is clearly shown in Matt. 5, Luke 6, and Rom. 12. Also that one should not use carnal weapons against another; nor they against their enemies. Isa. 2, Micah 4, Matt. 5. All bodily, worldly, carnal, earthly fighting, conflicts and wars are annulled and abolished among them through such law. Psalms 4, 5, Hos. 2: Which law of love, Christ . . . then, as the present High Priest, Himself observed and thereby gave His followers a pattern to follow after.[26]

Other Anabaptist writers expressed similar views. In 1531 Hans Pfistermeyer challenged the state church leaders with the thought that "The New Testament is more perfect than the Old. . . . Christ has taught a higher and more perfect doctrine and made with His people a New Covenant."[27] In a theological debate at Frankenthal the Swiss Brethren said: "We believe that the New Testament surpasses the Old. So much of the Old Testament as is not irreconcilable with the doctrine of Christ, we accept. . . . If anything that is necessary for salvation and a godly life was not taught by Christ and the Apostles but is contained in the Old Testament Scriptures, we desire to be shown."[28] And Menno Simons said: "All Scripture must

[25] John C. Wenger, "The Theology of Pilgram Marpeck," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (1938), XII, 207.

[26] *Ibid.*, 241.

[27] Quoted in John Horsch, *Mennonites in Europe*, 355.

[28] *Ibid.*, 355-6.

be interpreted according to the spirit, teaching, walk and example of Christ and the Apostles."[29]

The question may fairly be asked: Why did God permit this lower standard of conduct under the old covenant? In particular, how do we explain the fact that God commanded Israel to go to war only to have Jesus reject warfare later on? Is Jesus contradicting God? Or why should God command Saul to destroy King Agag when His own fundamental moral law says, "Thou shalt not kill"? Does God contradict Himself? We can find help in answering these questions by reading what Jesus says about divorce. On one occasion He told the Pharisees: "He which made them *at the beginning* made them male and female. . . . For this cause shall a man . . . cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. . . . What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The Pharisees replied by asking Jesus: "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?" To this Jesus replied: "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives, *but from the beginning it was not so.*"[30]

Here Jesus means to say that under God's moral law divorce is forbidden, and *in the beginning* this was the rule. But then sin entered the world and man was degraded to a very low estate, so much so that God had to destroy most of the human race. Even the descendants of those who remained departed from God and became very wicked, as for example the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Then God called out Abraham as the founder of a new nation who would keep the true faith alive. But even the children of Abraham in the Old Testament came far short of obeying God as they should have obeyed Him. They rebelled frequently and murmured often. They disobeyed their leaders and even threatened to stone them; and when they thus willfully turned their backs against God, He commanded their leaders to let them have their way, not because it was His will, but because this was the only thing God could do with sinful and stubborn people. *Because of the hardness of their hearts,* God commanded the granting of divorce which was, however, *against His own divine will.* From this it is clear that the Israelite who divorced his wife under the Mosaic code sinned in doing so, even though God through Moses had commanded divorce.

The Old Testament provides other illustrations of the same prin-

[29] *Ibid.,* 356.

[30] Matt. 19:4-8. Italics are by the author.

ciple. When the prophet Samuel grew old in years the people demanded a king. This was contrary to God's will and Samuel told them so. The people insisted, however, until God finally told Samuel to anoint a king, explaining that the people had not rejected Samuel, but God.[31] God even instructed Samuel how to proceed in selecting the king; and when Saul was selected, "Samuel said to all the people, see ye him *whom the Lord hath chosen.*"[32] Thus, within the space of three chapters, God said it was not His will that Israel should have a king, then He told Samuel to anoint a king and finally God Himself chose the man who was to be the king. Here again, because of Israel's sinfulness, God commanded an act which was definitely against His own will and purpose.

The sending of the twelve spies from Kadesh-barnea into Canaan is another illustration of this principle. God had brought Israel from Egypt through the Red Sea in a miraculous way. The law had been given at Sinai, and Israel had arrived at the very threshold of the promised land. Moses then spoke and said: "Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee; go up and possess it."[33] But instead of proceeding at once the people asked that spies be first sent into the land to examine it. The story in the book of Numbers says God commanded Moses to send the spies,[34] but from Deuteronomy it is clear that the people had first requested this privilege after God had commanded them to march into the land and possess it.[35] Apparently this is another case where God commanded a course of action which was against His own will, after the sinful people had refused to follow His original plan.

This seems all the more clear from what followed. After the spies returned from their investigation ten of them advised against going into the land, because of the giants and the fortifications. Only Caleb and Joshua urged the people to obey the command of God, and when they did so the people rose up in rebellion against them. They threatened to remove Moses from office and elect a new captain to lead them back to Egypt. When Caleb and Joshua pleaded against this rash idea the people were ready to stone them and likely would have done so had God not interfered. So serious was this act of disobedience that God punished them by announcing that the possession of Canaan would be delayed until the end of forty years when that generation would have passed away. As soon as the people heard this

[31] I Sam. 8:4-22. [32] I Sam. 10:24. [33] Deut. 1:21.
[34] Num. 13:1-2. [35] Deut. 1:22-23.

they murmured and said they were going up at once, even though the day before they wanted to kill their good leaders for suggesting this. Moses warned them not to go: "Go not up for the Lord is not among you."[36] But once more Israel "rebelled against the commandment of the Lord, and went presumptuously up into the hill," only to be attacked by a hostile tribe which chased and destroyed them from Seir to Hormah.[37]

The principal wars of the Old Testament were those fought by Israel in the effort to take possession of Canaan; and the story of Kadesh-barnea gives the key for an understanding of those wars. Undoubtedly, Israel's fightings were the consequence of her own sins, and contrary to the will of God. Exodus 20 gives us the story of the ten commandments where the words, "Thou shalt not kill," occupy a prominent place in this higher moral law. Then Exodus 23, just a little later, is an instruction book for the approaching march to Canaan. This chapter contains some remarkable instructions, and some promises just as remarkable. The early portion deals with the treatment of enemies and reads almost like the Sermon on the Mount. "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, thou shalt forbear to leave him, thou shalt surely release it with him."[38]

Then, in speaking of the coming possession of Canaan, God says:

> Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee by the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. . . . If thou shalt indeed hearken unto his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. . . . And I will send the hornet before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before thee. I will not drive them out from before thee in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land. . . . Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me; for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.[39]

As Edward Yoder suggests, "this looks very much like a plan for the peaceful penetration of the land of Canaan under God's immediate leading and direction."[40] There are three essential points in the plan. First, God would remove the Canaanites by super-

[36] Num. 14:42. [37] Deut. 1:43-44. [38] Ex. 23:4-5.
[39] Ex. 23:20-33.
[40] Edward Yoder, "Wars in the Old Testament," *Gospel Herald* (1940), 33, 366.

natural means. Second, the removal would be a gradual one, only as fast as Israel itself would be able to occupy the land through increase of its population. And third, the success of this program depended entirely on Israel keeping itself free from the wicked and depraved Canaanite tribes, morally, socially, and religiously. That is, strict obedience to God and the peaceful penetration of Canaan were to go together. This is altogether reasonable when we remember that God had only recently delivered Israel by supernatural means at the Red Sea. If God had saved Moses and His people from the mighty Egyptian Pharaoh, why should He not do the same in the case of the puny Canaanite tribes? To this promise and condition God always attached a warning that disobedience would bring disaster. "If ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me . . . then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you . . . and I will bring a sword upon you. . . ."[41] Must we not conclude from this that Israel's experience with the sword as recorded in Joshua, Judges, and the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles were simply the results of Israel's walking "Contrary to God"?

An examination of the record certainly shows that Israel's sins were great enough to warrant that conclusion. Within a short time after receiving the ten commandments Israel sinned by worshiping the golden calf.[42] False worship was introduced by the offering of strange fire.[43] One man was guilty of blasphemy.[44] Israel murmured in complaint of its food and for other reasons.[45] Moses' own sister rebelled against him.[46] All these sins are mentioned prior to the disobedience and failure at Kadesh-barnea. Following that event we read of the rebellion under Korah which God punished with a plague in which more than 14,000 people died.[47] A little later we find that the people began to mix with the Moabites in marriage and in worship even before the march into Canaan began.[48] After Israel had partially taken the land this practice continued in direct violation of God's command. Professor Ira M. Price describes this condition as follows:

> Peaceful proximity to the corrupt customs and worship of their neighbors was a subtle danger. It soon resulted in friendly commercial intercourse, in mixed marriages, in a kind of free and easy coalescence of manners and customs. The seductive religious rites and festivals of these new

[41] Lev. 26:21-25. [42] Ex. 32. [43] Lev. 10:1-2.
[44] Lev. 24:10. [45] Num. 11. [46] Num. 12.
[47] Num. 16. [48] Num. 25.

neighbors, appealing especially to the physical senses of Israel, soon made captives of the unwary conquerors, and won them over to the practises of the Canaanites. The debilitating effect of the new life in settled communities soon made havoc of the homely virtues of the sturdy nomads of the desert. The weakening of their moral and religious fiber made the territory of the Israelites a fair field for the ever-watchful and waiting enemies.

. . . .

During the days of the judges, we find an incredibly corrupt condition of affairs (Judg. 19 to 21). The prevalence of priestly prostitution to the service of idols, of unspeakable crimes, kindled a flame of internal strife, in which Benjamin was almost exterminated. This state of things opened the door for new aggressions of the Philistines, who were not slow to see and improve their opportunity.[49]

The Psalmist has given us a vivid description of the spiritual condition of Israel:

We have sinned . . . we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly. Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt. . . . They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. . . . Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word; but murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord. . . . They soon forgat his works, they waited not for his counsel; but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.[50]

When we look at this picture, do we need to wonder that God's plan for a peaceful possession of Canaan was not realized? If Israel lived on such a low moral and spiritual level, and if the tribes fought among themselves until one of them was almost exterminated, how could Israel be saved from fighting with the Canaanites? Certainly such a people were far from the nonresistant way of life. If a man with such a record claimed to be a conscientious objector today, we would say he is full of hypocrisy; and no one would deny the right of a draft board to question the sincerity of his claims. Israel's disobedient conduct and the nonresistant way of life simply do not go together. God's way of peace as required by the higher moral law could not be carried out until Israel was ready to repent from her sins. So in the meantime the natural law of cause and effect had to have its way. The Israelites sinned and suffered the consequences of their own sin. They "lusted in the wilderness," so God let them have their way but "sent leanness into their soul"—a leanness which could not measure up to the standards of the moral law.

The Old Testament commands of God to slay the Amalekites,

[49] Ira M. Price, *The Monuments and the Old Testament* (Phila., 1925), 242-3, 245.
[50] Psa. 106.

and to hew Agag in pieces, and to kill the giant Goliath were given to a sinful, lean-souled people who had refused to live on a higher level. They insisted on living this kind of life, so God worked with them in the best way He could. It was His will that Israel should possess the land of Canaan and since they refused to live the nonresistant way of life in taking it, He commanded them to wage war. But when they obeyed this command they nevertheless sinned in doing so. No, it is not God's will that men should sin. But God can use even sinful men to carry out His eternal purposes. In a later day the prophet Isaiah proclaimed that God was sending the Assyrian as the instrument of His wrath to punish Judah for her sins.[51] But the Assyrian was a greater sinner even than Judah while he was being used of God for this purpose, and in due time God scourged the Assyrian for his deeds.[52]

No doubt it is the same today. Men speak of God raising up Churchill, or Roosevelt, or Stalin to destroy Hitler. Perhaps He does. But who would say that God is not also using Hitler to punish the sins of other nations? While the sins of some nations may seem greater than those of others, surely all of the nations have sinned. Therefore perhaps God in His providence is using the nations to punish each other. But certainly all of them are sinning as they are being so used. In the same way God used a sinful warring Israel for the achievement of His purposes, and on occasion directed and commanded Israel's wars to that end. But in obeying these commands Israel nevertheless sinned, because her whole life was on a level below that of God's higher moral law. She had refused to live according to the will of God.

No doubt all the provisions of the old covenant which are out of line with the standards of the new, must be interpreted in the same way. Divorce, the legal oath, retaliation, blood vengeance, capital punishment, warfare, and every Old Testament practice and every element in the Mosaic civil code which Jesus set aside with His word of authority had formerly been permitted only because God's people had fallen into sin and rejected His way, so that they were unable to operate under the banner of love. Therefore, what Jesus did was not to contradict the program of God, but rather to restore the moral order among men to the place where God had originally placed it. Under the new covenant the practices of the old code had to be set aside.

[51] Isa. 10:5-6. [52] Isa. 10:26.

As we approach the later history of Israel this truth grows increasingly clear. When King David desired to build a temple for the worship of God he received a significant reply. God said to him: "Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars; thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight."[53] Here is a clear indication that warfare and the shedding of human blood are outside the plan of God for His people. King David, great servant of God though he may have been, was nevertheless disqualified, because of his military career, for the high and holy task of building the temple where men would gather to worship the God of peace and love.

It is the writings of the prophets, however, that set forth most clearly in the Old Testament the true character of God's moral law. Even though these holy men were living under the old covenant, they were definitely knocking at the door of the new. Almost 600 years before the time of Christ the prophet Ezekiel spoke of the hardness of Israel's heart, which he said must be done away: "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."[54]

The message of the prophet Isaiah is in the same vein. He presents a long catalogue of Israel's sins. They are rebellious.[55] They are "laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that deal corruptly."[56] They are a people of unclean lips.[57] Their head is sick and their heart is faint.[58] Their hands are full of bloodshed. Their feet "make haste to shed innocent blood." "The way of peace they know not."[59] God has forsaken them because they are idolaters and warriors.[60] Had it not been for a small remnant they would have been like unto Sodom and Gomorrah.[61] How was the peaceful, nonresistant way of life possible among such a people? It could not exist in this state of affairs. But the time for a new manner of life was now approaching. The Messiah was soon to appear. The day of redemption was at hand. Though Israel like sheep had gone astray the Messiah would bear the iniquity of them all, and by His stripes they would be healed.[62]

53 I Chr. 22:8.
54 Ezek. 11:19-20.
55 Isa. 1:2.
56 Isa. 1:4.
57 Isa. 6:5.
58 Isa. 1:5.
59 Isa. 1:15; 59:3, 7-8.
60 Isa. 2:7-8; 30:15-17; 31:1-3.
61 Isa. 1:9.
62 Isa. 53:5-6.

Israel must be cleansed and purified: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil. . . . Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."[63] And then in the new day of the Lord wars will be done away from among those of God's children who are washed in the blood of the Lamb: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."[64] Or again: "All the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning, for fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."[65] This is the program of God for His people who have been redeemed from the sinful ways of backslidden Israel. This is the order of the new covenant to be inaugurated with the coming of the Messiah.

Not all the future events in God's program are clear, of course. Some Christians believe that at His second coming Christ will establish a literal kingdom upon the earth, in which only the redeemed will be present, and in which the peaceful state of affairs described in Isaiah will exist universally. Others do not believe that the Scriptures teach such a future kingdom. Whichever of these views is correct, however, there can be no question but that the peaceful, nonresistant way taught by Isaiah and Christ is intended for the everyday life of God's people, here and now. Of course, this manner of life is not expected of those who are not Christians. Until sin has been finally destroyed wars will continue. But those who are Christ's disciples are commanded to "follow in his steps."

Even in Isaiah's own day, though Israel lay between the hosts of Assyria on the one hand and those of Egypt on the other and in constant danger of invasion, especially from the east, the prophet makes it clear that it was not God's program that Israel should strike with the sword.

> Therefore thus saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, . . . be not afraid of the Assyrian, though he smite thee with the rod, and lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt. For yet a very little while, and . . . Jehovah of hosts will stir up against him a scourge . . . and it shall come to

[63] Isa. 1:16-18. [64] Isa. 2:4. [65] Isa. 9:5-6.

pass in that day, that his burden shall depart from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck. . . .[66]

Again and again Isaiah refers to the oppressor nations whom God will chastise, but Israel herself is not commanded to take up the sword against the enemy.[67] He warns Israel not to form a military alliance with Egypt; not to trust in horses and chariots; but to trust in the Lord. The Assyrian oppressor will be destroyed, but not by the sword of God's people. God in His own way will perform it.[68] And true to the word of the prophet, when King Sennacherib led the hosts of Assyria against Israel, Jehovah in His own way turned back the invader without the good king Hezekiah striking a single blow.[69] This deliverance is almost as remarkable as that at the Red Sea, and it would seem that Israel is just beginning once more to fit into the program and manner of life which God had planned for them from the beginning, and which they had rejected in the days of Moses and those which followed.

The prophet Jeremiah, a century later, went even farther than Isaiah, and actually urged Judah to submit to the rule of Babylon: "Bring your necks under the yoke of the King of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live."[70] Jeremiah made it clear that this nonresistant attitude toward the invader was according to the will of God: "Thus saith Jehovah, . . . the God of Israel, If thou wilt go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire, and thou shalt live and thy house. But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand."[71]

So nonresistant was Jeremiah in his attitude toward Babylon that his fellow Israelites charged him with treason and cast him into prison.[72] But the nonresistant prophet was misunderstood in his own day even as nonresistant people are often misunderstood today. Jeremiah was not guilty of treason. He was not disloyal to Judah. But he knew that it was contrary to the will of God that His people should engage in warfare. He also knew that the Babylonian captivity was coming as a judgment from God upon the sins of Judah. For this reason it was useless for King Zedekiah to resist. What Judah needed was not resistance but repentance from her sins.

66 Isa. 10:24-27. 67 E. g., Isa. 13 and 16. 68 Isa. 30 and 31.
69 Isa. 37; II Kgs. 19. 70 Jer. 27:12. 71 Jer. 38:17-18.
72 Jer. 37:13-15.

Jeremiah does not stop, however, with his advice to surrender. The time was coming when Judah's punishment would be complete, and then she would be freed from captivity again. "Behold I will turn again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have compassion on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon its own hill, and the palace shall be inhabited after its own manner."[73] But the escape and return from captivity were also to be entirely without warfare on Judah's part. True, the warfare of wicked nations would have a part in the release from captivity: "Jehovah hath stirred up the spirit of the king of the Medes, because his purpose is against Babylon, to destroy it; for it is the vengeance of Jehovah, the vengeance of his temple."[74] But God's people were not to fight. Isaiah says they were not even to flee, nor to go in haste: "For ye shall not go out in haste, neither shall ye go by flight; for Jehovah will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rearward."[75]

Surely if the message of the prophets means anything it means that the day of warfare for God's people was over. The moral lapse represented by the harsh features of the Mosaic code, and the bloody wars of the days of the Judges, were past. In the times of their ignorance God may have winked at Israel's inferior moral performance; out of mercy for a backslidden people He may have permitted it. But the day of redemption was now at hand. And under the new covenant which Christ at His coming would shortly establish, God's people must walk in a newness of life in which warfare and strife can have no part.

[73] Jer. 30:18. [74] Jer. 51:11. [75] Isa. 52:12.

THE ORIGIN OF MENNONITE STATE SERVICE IN RUSSIA, 1870-1880*

JACOB SUDERMANN

The contents of this paper will be familiar material to Mennonites who have been interested in their history, and especially familiar to Russian Mennonites in our country and Canada who have had first-hand acquaintance with the administration and execution of obligatory service to the State in Russia. To the majority of English-speaking Mennonites, however, as well as to all others, this material, to which they have not had access because of language difficulties, will be new and interesting reading. In our generation we are for the first time faced with what promises to be a permanent conscription program, not only for the duration of this war but for years to come. In view of this, it should interest us to know what Russian brethren did under similar circumstances when their special privileges were taken away and when they were forced to outline some personal service project to their government which would still preserve the principles of their faith to themselves and to their posterity.

The following material is merely an organized translation from several publications in the German language. No attempt is made to present anything new. To those familiar with the German language and wishing a more detailed account we suggest reading from the following books:

Friesen, P. M., *Die Alt=Evangelische Mennonitische Brüderschaft im Russland, 1789-1910 im Rahmen der Mennonitischen Gesamtgeschichte.* Halbstadt, Taurien: Verlaggesellschaft "Raduga," 1911. 930 pp. Görz, Abraham, *Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Forstdienstes der Mennoniten in Russland, nach urkundlichen Akten zusammengestellt.* Gross Tokmak: H. Lenzman, 1907. 50 pp. Isaak, Franz, *Die Molotschnaer Mennoniten. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte derselben.* Halbstadt, Taurien: Kommissions Verlag and Druck von H. J. Braun, 1908. (Hylkema, T. O.,) *Die Mennoniten-Gemeinden in Russland während der Kriegs=und Revolutionsjahre 1914 bis 1920, aus dem Holländischen übersetzt und ergänst.* Heilbronn am Neckar: Kommissions=Verlag der Mennonitischen Flüchtlingsfürsorge E. V., 1921, 115 pp. Lindeman, Karl, *Von den deutschen Kolonisten in Russland, Ergebnisse einer Studienreise.* Schriften des deutschen Ausland=Instituts, Band 13 und 14. Stuttgart: Ausland und Heimat Verlags=Aktiengesellschaft, 1924. 123 pp. Ehrt, Adolf, *Das Mennonitentum in Russland von*

* A paper read before the Mennonite Historical Society at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, in October, 1941.

seiner Einwanderung bis zur Gegenwart. Langensalza: Verlag von Julius Beltz, 1932. 175 pp.

I

As an inducement to German Mennonites in East Prussia and Poland to settle in the southern frontiers of Russia, the Empress of Russia, Catherine the Great, offered them complete religious and almost complete personal freedom. They were exempted from military service, allowed to worship God in their traditional manner, permitted to administer their own civil affairs, and given unhindered control over their schools. Their colonies constituted what almost amounted to a state within a state. These privileges were reaffirmed in 1800 upon their request by the successor to Catherine, Paul I, in a special document which served as the administrative guide of the Russian government in Mennonite matters until the passage of the conscription law of 1874. As was to be expected, the Russian Mennonites prospered under these conditions. The international disturbances of Europe from 1789 to 1815 scarcely touched them. The Crimean War found them already well entrenched in economic security. They were able to offer to their emperor and country a valued service in this national crisis by their Samaritan work. The state recognized this work officially through the emperor. In the disastrous war with Japan, although far removed from the actual scene of conflict, they contributed in money and clothing for the rehabilitation of the stricken provinces.

In the course of the nineteenth century in Russia that national consciousness and desire for parliamentary government began to awaken, which little by little undermined the autocratic authority of the emperor and called for a re-examination of the special privileges granted to all foreign groups in the past by the royal family. A manifestation of this was the military conscription bill of 1870, which cut diagonally across one of the most cherished of the Mennonite principles of faith, namely that of nonresistance.

The first knowledge of this projected law came to the Mennonites through the person of the Governor-general Kotzebue in a letter addressed to Isbrand Friesen, then president of the Mennonite civil council of Berdjansk. The governor summoned Friesen for an exchange of views on the "military" question. Friesen came back to his constituency, reporting that the government was requesting of all Russian citizens personal military service to the state, without ex-

ception. Bishop John Harder immediately telegraphed to Senator von Hahn, at Petersburg, for more information. Senator Hahn, a friend of the Mennonites, suggested that a representative deputation be sent to the capital as early as possible, to argue their case.

The Mennonite leaders at first hoped that an appeal to the emperor would result in a reaffirmation of their old privileges; short of this, they expected at least the permission to maintain the principle of nonresistance. There ensued a long series of deputation journeys to St. Petersburg, extending over a period of four years. Supplementing these were many district and general delegate meetings which acted as policy-determiners and issued instructions to the deputies sent to the capital.

As the result of a general conference held in the Alexanderwohl church, January 22, 1871, which represented the Molotschna, Chortitza and Bergthal settlement areas, the former two colonies decided to send a delegation to St. Petersburg to ascertain what the real situation was and then to plead for special consideration of the Mennonite case for the present and the future, and if necessary to appeal to the Czar in person.[1] .

The text of the instructions to this first deputation follows.

To the deputies:[2]

In numerous newspapers of our fatherland we find announcements regarding the introduction of general military duty for which those classes hitherto exempted, namely, also the colonists, shall be liable; whereby we and our brothers in the faith, also belonging to this group of colonists, have been plunged into care and distress, and authorize you, herewith, beloved brethren to make inquiry regarding these circumstances and impower you to take the necessary steps to bring before his Majesty, if necessary, the pleas of our people of continued gracious tolerance and legal confirmation of our freedom from military service now and in the future.

Do not fail to mention that we recognize with deep-felt gratitude the favorable treatment and patronage of the past, for which we must declare ourselves unworthy before man and God, and for that reason we are at any time freely ready to prove our feelings of love and thankfulness toward the throne and toward our Fatherland with deeds.

We demand nothing, but ask only for favor, and offer the prayer of Daniel. We lie before you with our prayer, based not upon self-righteousness but upon your great mercy for our people, in order thereby to express before God and the Great of the Kingdom our confession and our plea.

Thus go in peace, accompanied by our prayers and blessings. May the

1 The Bergthal church community voted to emigrate to America. They were a minority.

2 The deputies were: Bishop Leonhard Sudermann, Bishop Gerhard Dück, Reverend Heinrich Epp, Reverend Peter Görz, Reverend Franz Isaac, and lay brother Herman Janzen.

Almighty God give you and us and our children mercy before these men through whose word the decision for our future will be made. May the will of the Lord come to pass, for He is gracious and gives mercy.

Given at the synod of the Molotschna, Chortiza and Bergtal Mennonites in the colony Alexanderwohl, on January 22, 1871.

(Signatures follow)[3]

On February 1, 1871 the Molotschna deputation left for Odessa in order to contact first the territorial officials. After much delay because of bad roads and poor railway facilities at this time of the year, they arrived in Odessa only to find that the officials they sought had departed two days earlier for St. Petersburg; neither did they meet here the deputation from the Chortitza colony as had been agreed. They heard from Jacob Töws in Odessa that the officials had left word to the deputies that their trip to St. Petersburg was unnecessary, for the president of the Council and the governor-general would represent them there. It was decided to ask for a new letter of authority which was to be sent to St. Petersburg for the four Molotschna delegates in case the Chortitza delegation would leave it up to the state officials to represent them, and in case the Chortitza delegation would not be in St. Petersburg when the Molotschna delegation arrived.

The Molotschna deputation arrived in the capital on February 20, 1871. Here they met Mr. Ettinger, President of the Odessa Public Welfare Commission, who promised to introduce them to the governor-general and to the minister of provincial affairs, Seloni. He warned them at the same time that they could not hope for a very warm reception from the minister, but in any case one could not ignore him. He told them further that if they were careful, Governor-general Kotzebue might give them some inside information.

In due time the deputies were ushered into the presence of Governor-general Kotzebue. He told them they had come too early, but that he had made contact with Count von Heyden, the president of the commission which had the proposed conscription law under advisement. It was the Count's opinion that the Mennonites could not be exempted from service in military hospitals and general sanitary service,[4] which he hoped would not be against their conscience to perform. The Mennonite deputies pointed out to Kotzebue that

[3] Signatories are listed in Franz Isaac, *Die Molotschnaer Mennoniten*, Halbstadt, 1908.

[4] Sanitary Service—similar to Red Cross work although not under the Red Cross organization.

they, of course, felt duty bound to care for the wounded, but there was the difference of doing it under army supervision or in their own institutions. Kotzebue answered that such service would only be requested of them under the auspices of the Red Cross and that there was no question of bearing arms while on duty. Further information he could not give them, but he urged them to keep in touch with him.

From the governor-general's office the deputies went to see Senator Hahn, who was genuinely glad to see them. He told them that he had just discovered that a friend of his, Senator Gerngross, was on the commission in charge of the new military law, and advised them to see this person. Senator Hahn himself doubted, however, that the Mennonites would be able to avoid sanitary service under the jurisdiction of the army.

The above all happened February 23, 1871. On the 24th the deputies went to see Senator Gerngross. This gentleman's opinion was that Mennonites could not be completely freed of service by payment of an exemption tax. He said that if he would advocate this in the Commission, he would be opposed and be voted down by the nobility whose privileges were also being taken away. In his opinion the Mennonites would have to submit to sanitary service, which could not be against their conscience. He, however, could not guarantee that they would not carry weapons, but he felt sure they would not have to use them; they would, moreover, have to wear uniforms. When the deputies interposed that they did not like the idea of letting their boys mix with the army and come under influences which would effect their faith and character adversely, and that they would prefer to do voluntary service as during the Crimean War, the senator said, he believed the army atmosphere would be a good school for the Mennonite boys.

The following day the Chortitza deputation arrived. On the same day the delegates drew up a petition to the Minister of Government Domains, Seloni. The petition was a simple request for kind consideration of Mennonite privileges and for the representation of their case to Czar Alexander by the minister. The meeting with Seloni took place on February 27. While still in his waiting room the deputies made the acquaintance of a Baron von Meden, a right hand man to minister Seloni. With him they discussed the Mennonite position in a very friendly way and the Baron in turn introduced them to Seloni when he came in to receive the petition. Seloni read

their petition and declared himself in the Russian language[5] as impressed with it and promised to represent their case.

The combined deputation (Molotschna and Chortitza) then revisited Senator Hahn. They told him they had been rather discouraged by the remarks of Gerngross, especially because of his doubt that the present generation would still be exempted from military service. Senator Hahn reassured them on this point. It was his belief that Gerngross had simply not wished to commit himself on this point, but that he was at heart really very much interested in the Mennonite case and favorable to it.

On Monday, the first day of March, the deputation, at the request of Count Heyden, Baron Melen, and Senator Gerngross, drew up a memorandum on the Mennonite stand on nonresistance. When they handed this in they were informed by Count Heyden that the new military law would probably not go into effect until 1874, that the present generation would still be exempt, and that the calling up of colonists [foreign settlers in Russia] for military service would probably be delayed till 1895. In the meantime he advised them to get used to the idea of sanitary service from which they could not hope to be freed, else everybody would want to be Mennonites.

The memorandum on nonresistance as handed to the government reads as follows:

Our beloved Saviour, Jesus Christ, is our great Prince of Peace. As such even the Old Testament announces Him through the prophets, Isaiah 9:6. The angels also acclaimed Him as such at His birth, Luke 2:14. His kingdom, which He came to found on earth is a Kingdom of Peace, Isaiah 9:7; Psalm 72:7; Gospel of John, 18:36; Isaiah 26:3 & 4. His messengers are messengers of peace, Isaiah 52:7; Nehemiah 2:1; Romans 10:15, and they have the important duty to preach the gospel of peace. All those whom the messengers of peace succeed in recruiting for the glorious kingdom are children of peace. In them there occurs a change of heart and conduct of life of whom the Word of Truth tells us that they are turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God in order that they might receive forgiveness of sins and become heirs with those who are sanctified, Acts 26:18.

The Children of Peace change the course of their former life, Ephesians 4:22, with its evil works of the flesh, to which the apostle Paul calls our attention, because they know that the old man has been crucified with Christ so that his sinful life may cease, so that he henceforth serve sin no more, Romans 6:6. The children of Peace put on the new man who has awakened to the recognition that he has been made in the image of God, who created him, Colossians 3:10; the new man who has been created in the likeness of

[5] C. Henry Smith, *The Story of the Mennonites,* Berne, 1941, p. 441, speaks of the unfavorable impression the deputation made because they could not speak Russian.

God with knowledge of true justice and holiness, Ephesians 4:24, and who manifests the fruits of the spirit which are: love, peace, joy, longsuffering, friendliness, faith, gentleness, and purity, Galatians 5:22. Love is the first and greatest of the fruits of live faith through which the important heart and mode of life change comes about. Love urges the children of peace to obedience toward their glorious King and Prince of Peace who has given this new commandment of love to them, John 13:34, and who in Matthew 5 thoroughly explains the divine law of the Old Testament; who calls their attention to the character of the Old Testament agreement between God and man, and makes them conscious of their work in the kingdom of God, which consists alone of the practice of love, Mark 12:31.

The divinely true determination of man in time and eternity is the communion with God; his real goal in life is to do the will of God. To call man's attention to this goal and in order to prepare him for it, God revealed His will in His Holy Word. Man's attention is called to the great kingdom of peace which Jesus builds with His disciples, and which consists of justice, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Romans 14:17; the kingdom of which the great Prince of Peace Himself says, Luke 7:21, "one will not say: See here or see there it is; for behold it is within you." God has chosen the poor of the world, who are rich in faith, as heirs of the Kingdom, an heirship which He has promised those who love Him. Although the conduct of war happens now and again under the direct command of God as, i.e., Samuel 15, our Saviour Jesus Christ, however, has expressly declared Himself in the covenant of the New Testament in the same manner as we hold and believe with our fathers, Matthew 5:44-45; Matthew 5:39; Romans 12:17-21; I Peter 3:23; II Corinthians 10:3, 4; I Peter 3:9.

In the light of this persuasion, based on the Word of God, our fathers, also, have kept themselves distant from military service, and in the participation of the use of weapons. They have always been looked upon as of little importance in the land, and for the sake of freedom of conscience have given up many an earthly advantage, but also have often left home and fatherland in order not to become unfaithful to their persuasion nor to waver in their faith in the promise of the Saviour: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God," or "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." The Lord has kept His word, although not before much sifting and suffering was accomplished by our forefathers. Without their action, yes to their complete surprise, He offered for them an asylum in Russia, whose noble rulers He always filled with favor and mercy toward us, and has crowned the faithfulness of our fathers through us, their children. In addition He has blessed us with earthly goods in our new fatherland, which we have learned to love. Even today we have faith that if the Lord does not intend to subject us to a new period of sifting and refining that He will guide the heart of our beloved Czar and lord and his high government, so that we will experience no pressure on us because of our faith or because of our freedom of conscience.

May His holy will prevail! Amen.

St. Petersburg,
March 2, 1871. (Signatures of Deputies)

The Mennonite deputies took leave of the two senators who promised to send them news of any new action on their case. Franz

Isaac and Henry Epp, however, because they did not leave with the other deputies immediately, had the good fortune to meet the Czar in person. Von Hahn asked them one day if they had seen the Czar. When they answered, No, he instructed them that this would be possible if they went to the Czar's summer garden. On March 5 they acted on this advice and seated themselves on a bench in the garden and awaited developments. Soon the Czar passed by in his carriage. On his return he stopped in front of them and asked if they were from the district of Tauridia, and whether they were Mennonites, and what they had come for. When they said they had come because of the new military law, he said simply, "Ah," and departed. The two men felt they had achieved their purpose, however, and were elated that the Czar had deigned to ask them some questions.

The deputation arrived back home in March and gave their report. A period of anxious waiting ensued. No definite news came. Finally the waiting became unbearable for the colonists. Disquieting rumors had emanated from St. Petersburg. It was decided to send a new deputation. The members were all new men with the exception of Franz Isaac.[6]

The new instructions directed the deputies to appeal directly to the Czar for reaffirmation of freedom from military service. In part these were:

> May your pleading, searching, and knocking result in showing us a way in which we can do our duty to the State, outside the jurisdiction of the military service law, and without embarrassing our conscience prove our love toward throne and fatherland. We in the meantime will come before Him who has promised: "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."
> January 25, 1872.
> Given at Alexanderwohl, the Molotschna and Crimean communities cooperating. (Twenty-eight signatures.)[7]

On February 2, 1872, the second delegation arrived in the Czar's city. They learned through Senator Gerngross that the commission in charge of the conscription bill had decided to offer the Mennonites work in the Sanitation Service, if possible, without use of weapons. Nothing more definite could be ascertained, they were told, until the Imperial Council had had time to examine the new service law. This could not happen till September or October of 1872 at the earliest. The deputation decided to let matters rest there, and after securing

[6] Other members of this deputation were Bishops John Harder, Franz Görz, Jacob Wiebe, Isaak Peters, and Jacob Töws.

[7] Signatories may be ascertained by referring to: Franz Isaac, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

a promise for Pastor Hans,[8] a Moravian preacher at St. Petersburg, to notify them of any new developments, they went home. At home, they advised a general conference of Mennonites to discuss the whole situation and to try to come to some mutual understanding among themselves.

While the second deputation was getting its information from Senator Gerngross they were surprised that the senator had complete information of the Alexanderwohl conference, which had sent them. The moot point was that reports in the hands of government officials spoke of "foreigners"[9] who made propaganda among Mennonites for emigration. The deputies were also questioned about a report that a delegation was being sent by the Mennonites to ask for exemption from all service and for permission to proselyte in the whole state.[10] Such ridiculous charges were answered by the deputation with a special memorandum dated at St. Petersburg, February 14, 1872.[11]

On May 1, 1872, the Mennonites received a letter from Pastor Hans in which he had included the actual report of the Military Service Commission to the Imperial Council regarding the Mennonite question. It read as follows:

> Those Mennonites who will be called to military service will only be used behind the front in hospitals, military workshops, (not munitions factories) or similar establishments, and are to be exempted from the bearing of arms. This ruling, however does not apply to such Mennonites who join the sect after the appearance of this ruling or such as enter the Russian realm as immigrants after its appearance.

This letter was followed on May 6 by a letter from Pastor Hans himself. It was probably written at the suggestion of and under the supervision of high government officials.[12] In this letter he empha-

[8] Pastor Theodor Hans was the Moravian pastor of a Moravian church in the capital. He was a close friend of some of the Mennonite leaders, and although his church did not follow the Mennonite stand on nonresistance, he himself was sympathetic. A closer study of the relations of the Mennonite and Moravian churches in Russia would be very interesting and worth while.

[9] This was obviously a reference to Cornelius Janzen, a Mennonite who was at the same time German consul at Berdjansk. Janzen as a consequence had to leave Russia very hurriedly.

[10] It is a well known fact that the Mennonites promised not to proselyte among Greek Orthodox church members when they obtained their original charter. Some people have interpreted this as a "sin," and one of the reasons for Mennonite troubles later.

[11] Isaac, Franz, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

[12] We do not wish to intimate that Pastor Hans was in government pay. The fact, however, remains that he acted as intermediary between Mennonites and the government, a service which from his viewpoint was necessary and honorable.

sized the seriousness of the Mennonite position and gave assurance that the government respected their conscience on the question of military service, and that it was desirous of keeping them in the country. The ruling regarding Mennonites was a special favor. He reminds them that in comparison with their brethren in Germany their status was far more favorable. The work projected for them would be of the rehabilitation type, instead of the destructive type, and for this service any Christian could offer his help. He continued by asking them to consider this leniency on the part of the government as a hint from God, and advised them against seeking to leave the country. He furthermore warned them not to agitate in favor of the emigration of which newspapers in St. Petersburg reported, and admonished them to remain to be a witness to the country.

When it became apparent that the Imperial Council must have had time to act on the ruling for Mennonites, a new conference, held in the Molotschna district, decided on sending another delegation. Before this delegation was organized Governor-general Kotzebue asked it to come to Kertsch to be presented to the emperor there. This audience, however, was later countermanded for an unknown reason. The deputation therefore proceeded directly to St. Petersburg, by way of Saratov and Samara,[13] in order to speak to the Mennonites there. Mennonite representatives from other isolated colonies also came here to counsel with them. We may thus speak of this deputation as the first one to be truly representative of the majority of Mennonite communities in Russia.

In St. Petersburg the delegates were received by the newly appointed Minister of Imperial Domains, Walujew. They were told that the military law was still not in its final form. They were admonished not to listen to idle rumors, or to hire a lawyer to represent their cause. They were to go home and wait patiently. Walujew promised to interpret their fears to the emperor. At Count Heyden's they were assured that new developments would be told them through Pastor Hans.

On January 15, 1873, the third letter from the Moravian pastor arrived. He told them, although he had no official information to give them, that he himself was disquieted for their cause and advised sending a new delegation to the Imperial Council rather than to continue to wait as Walujew had suggested. The memorandum which

[13] It should be kept in mind that some place names have changed since the revolution in Russia. St. Petersburg-Leningrad, Samara-Kuibyshev.

they would send in to the Council, he advised, should bear the stamp of Mennonite unity. Again he warned them to keep quiet about emigration: "Russia needs you, and the work which you have been given regarding this land is a large one," were his words.

The fourth delegation went straight to Count Heyden. He advised them to secure an audience with the Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaiewitsch, chairman of the Imperial Council, through his assistant. They succeeded in presenting their petition to the Grand Duke personally. This petition, without the salutatory decorations, reads as follows:

Your Majesty:

Most merciful lord, deeply troubled in our hearts regarding the military reform now in prospect for our fatherland, a reform which threatens us with the loss of religious freedom enjoyed in times past under the protection of our government, we dare in our distress to turn your attention to the following:

Item 1. Following the apostolic teaching of Menno Simons, our forefathers in times past have endured many hardships and persecutions for the sake of their faith. Near the close of the past century the great Russian Empress, Katherine II, summoned our fathers to immigrate to Russia under conditions which we were not only glad to accept, but in which many recognized the voice of God, God who was blessing them for the steadfast faith of their fathers. The most important promises given them were the ones concerning religious freedom for themselves and their children, and freedom from military service, forever.

Item 2. These preliminary conditions were affirmed by the Emperor, Paul I, by means of a special letter of the 6th of September, 1800, and after the succession were sustained on November 9, 1838, by Nicholas I, your blessed father.

Item 3. The faith of our fathers is a holy bequest unto us. It is the most precious heritage and a treasure which has been given us by God. It outstrips in value all earthly treasures and welfare. It is supported by all the words of the Holy Scriptures. Our Saviour preached peace and not war—war only against our sins. We do not seek for earthly honor and power. We follow the words of our Saviour according to Matthew 20:25-27; and the Gospel of John 18:36. We have no right to fight against adversity, Matthew 5:39. We may not unsheath the sword after the Lord commanded His disciple Peter to return his to its scabbard. The Lord has consecrated us to peace, I Corinthians 7:15. Our Saviour is a King of peace, and if we wish to be His children and wish to inherit the eternal Kingdom of peace, we must live in peace with everyone of our brethren who likewise have been created in the image of God.

The Spirit, which talks to us in the Holy Scriptures, commands us to seek peace and love as gifts from God through His Son Jesus Christ. In the light of this our confession of faith we can under no circumstances take part in military matters, either directly or indirectly, for in every case we would contribute to war. However, we are subjects of the higher powers and authorities, according to Romans 13, and we are ready to give to every-

one what we owe him: taxes to whom taxes are due, duty to whom duty is due, fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due. We are anxious to be as useful to our fatherland as possible. We pray God for its continued welfare. We pray for the Emperor and his royal family, and we are fully aware that when God the Lord blesses His anointed and the kingdom that the fullness of divine blessings also is poured out on us His least worthy children and subjects.

The tolerance for which our government has been known from time immemorial, its justice and benevolence, give us the courage to lay our petition at the feet of his majesty with the full confidence and hope that the high Imperial Council will not disregard our religious concerns and reasons for them, and that we as a consequence will not be subjected to the strict application of general military service.

After hearing this petition the Grand Duke said the Mennonites could not escape the general service, but they would be used only in hospitals and workshops. Then the deputation was dismissed.

Still not despairing of getting the personal attention of the Czar, who they believed would certainly rule in their favor by exempting them from all service, the same delegation returned to St. Petersburg in the fall of 1873, to lay their fears at the feet of their emperor himself. This constituted the fifth mission to the capital. Upon the suggestion of Pastor Hans they obtained another audience with the Minister of Imperial Domains. Walujew told them that the emperor would receive no delegation. The emperor already knew the wishes of the Mennonites and had asked as far as possible to shield them. The deputation, however, left a petition with the secretarial assistant to the Czar, hoping by this method to find a way to his fatherly heart. In this memorandum they again expressed the Mennonite concern over the military reform law and pleaded for the continuance of religious freedom.

II

The new military law brought about a major crisis in the history of the Russian Mennonites. It forced a re-thinking of a traditional viewpoint which in the course of good times had not been in sharp focus before the people. Serious differences of opinion soon became manifest. In some quarters doubt was expressed regarding the correctness of even a mild form of personal service to the state. The very fact that Mennonite youth was to be recruited for any service by means of a military law was a source of concern. Many felt their conscience would not permit any personal service. Some even went so far as to see a violation of conscience in any connection with the

state. Among these was the preacher Abraham Peter's group who, with like-minded Mennonites from the Volga district left the Molotschna to settle in Turkestan, where, however, they finally submitted to the same regulations as the rest of the Mennonites in Russia. By far the greatest number of the dissenters went to the United States and Canada. Whole communities, like the Alexanderwohl Church and the Bergthal Church, migrated in one body. This was the period of Russian Mennonite settlement to the prairie states and provinces as it is recorded in our own American and Canadian national histories. It is a story of trouble, toil, and tears, for the sake of spiritual values alone.

The Russian government took note of the migratory movements. These increased alarmingly after the law regarding Mennonite service finally came out in ukase[14] form in January, 1874. Finally the Czar himself acted to forestall the total loss to the state of his prosperous farmers of South Russia. Pastor Hans was the first to apprise them of the emperor's personal interest in a letter dated April 10, 1874. He wrote:

> I have just heard that his Majesty the Czar has decided to acquaint himself with your problem personally in the person of General von Totleben,[15] with the hope that he can head off the projected emigration and keep you in his land. You know, dear brethren, that I have told you in writing that His Majesty is kindly disposed toward you. Now you have the proof of action in your hands.
>
> Beloved brethren, you will receive him with the proper respect as emissary of His Majesty and approach him with the full trust that his mission deserves. He will call you together and visit you. His word to you is the word of the Czar; his interest in you is that of His Majesty's himself. May God the Lord richly bless this mission, the emissary, and above all the royal sender.
>
> St. Petersburg, April 10, 1874.
>
> With sincere love, your brother
> Theodor Hans.

In April, 1874, the general arrived in Halbstadt, Tauridia. Halbstadt was the central town of the Molotschna colony. There he spoke to the Mennonites in a fatherly manner, visited them in their homes, and spoke reassuringly at gatherings, of the emperor's favorable attitude toward them.

The Mennonites gathered in conference and appointed a com-

[14] Ukase—In Russia, a proclamation or imperial order having the force of law, a decree.

[15] General von Totleben was a Lutheran and a Crimean War hero, well known to the German colonists of South Russia.

mission to formulate their wishes to the government and to present these to the general. The following is the statement which was prepared.

To his Excellency, General-Adjutant von Totleben:

Your Excellency has in the past few days of your presence among us assured us repeatedly, with the same certainty, that we are to enjoy in the future as in the past the unchanged and undiminished favor of our most merciful Czar and master, and have revealed anew this favor through the extraordinary mission of your Excellency, and by assuring us that in the fulfillment of the requirements of personal service to the state the principles of our faith need not be violated, because a service entirely outside of the jurisdiction of the War Department will be offered us.

While at the same time expressing our profound thanks for this consideration, we also express our acceptance of the principle of personal service in the name of the greater part of our brothers in the faith. Since, however, we are still insufficiently acquainted with the character of the service proposed to us we ask permission to offer a memorandum based on thorough thought as to which of the services offered us would be most fitting to our circumstances. At the same time we feel obliged to give our warmest personal thanks to your excellency who has with such fatherly friendliness condescended to hear us, and ask you to represent us to His Majesty and give to him our most humble requests and wishes, and also give to him the following points so important to us:

Item 1. That if any change occurs in the military law which shall cause us to lose those privileges now granted, we be permitted to emigrate freely.

Item 2. That the schools which up to this time have been left to our supervision remain so, and that our schools enjoy equal rights with other schools of the Empire, for which we, from a sense of duty toward our fatherland, agree to pay serious attention to the instruction in the language of the country.[16]

Item 3. That it be made possible for us to situate our boys in places where we can have efficient supervision of them in closed groups, in order to give them the necessary spiritual care, and to maintain among them our church discipline, our articles of faith, and our church organization.

(Here follow signatures)[17]

The Russian Senate issued the ukase concerning Mennonite service May 14, 1875. At Halbstadt this ukase was read to a group representing all the colonies. It is contained in the second volume of the yearly publication of new laws under the heading, "Laws pertaining to obligatory service to the nation, and it reads as follows:

1. The Mennonites are to be exempted from shouldering weapons, and are to do duty in the marine workshops, in fire protection, and in special

[16] An especially grievous fault from the viewpoint of the government was that the Germans in South Russia continued to look upon German as their mother tongue after generations of time spent in Russia, and that culturally they continued to borrow from Germany.

[17] Signatories can be found in Abraham Görz, *Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Furstdienstes der Mennoniten in Russland*, Gross Tokmak, 1907, p. 25.

mobile commands of the Forestry Service. This does not extend to those Mennonites who have joined this denomination since January 1, 1874, or who have migrated to this country since that time.

2. The plan for the regulation of Mennonite obligatory service shall be presented to the emperor for his approval.

His Majesty the Emperor condescended to confirm these recommendations April 8, 1875, and has ordered their administration.

Be it so!

RULES

The Mennonites to whom this refers shall accomplish their service in the following manner:

1. They will be stationed in the Region of New Russia and the bounding departments, doing service:
   a) In the workshops of the Marine Department.
   b) In fire prevention.
   c) In special mobile commands of the forestry service, whose duty shall be the forestation of South Russia.
2. The length of service shall be identical to that of the military service law.
3. The men in service shall be grouped separately in order to permit the practice of their church services according to their persuasion.
4. After the completion of a term of service the men shall in case of war be called up only for the type of service indicated above.

Signed by
Grand Duke Konstantin.

A sixth deputation was now sent by the Mennonites. This time it was to present to General von Totleben, the memorandum which had been prepared, and which contained the wishes of the Mennonites as cited above. With the general they discussed verbally the following topics:

1. Concerning the continued control by Mennonites of their schools. Totleben made answer to the effect that the Minister of Education, Tolstoi, had already been approached on this. He advised that a program be drawn up regarding elementary and higher education for Tolstoi's perusal.

2. Concerning the permission to emigrate to foreign countries, if the law regarding Mennonites were ever changed to their detriment. General Totleben remarked on this that they would be denied this request. In his opinion he considered it very unlikely that the government would change the law. He expressed a bit of astonishment on the part of the government that the Mennonites should be so distrustful of its good intentions toward them.

3. Concerning the question of choice of service, the general advised to leave the matter rest for the time being since the govern-

ment was new at this work and needed time for orientation. He, however, thought the boys would be allowed to choose according to their abilities as this would be in the interest of the country. He quieted their fears on the question of military-related work in the Marine Department; he assured them it would consist of making rope and building small vessels, tables, and chairs.

4. Concerning the service of the reserves, he felt they need have no worry about this for in time of war the Forestry Service would certainly not be expanded.

The delegation departed after an hour's conference and left a memorandum to be given to the government. This constituted the Mennonite agreement to the government's compromise proposals as presented by Totleben, and contains the following points:

Item 1. The churches had decided the forestry service would be best suited to their need. They thought it best to be allowed to supervise the camps as many would otherwise emigrate.

Item 2. It was requested that the boys be allowed to choose their own field of service within the scope of the forestry service.

Item 3. Every Mennonite should be given personal freedom to emigrate. The delegation felt denial of this would arouse fear and distrust, and this was not in the interest of the government.

Item 4. Permission to establish their own conscription centers was asked, and that boys of higher educational brackets be given the same rights as in other service departments.

Item 5. The *status quo* for school administration and equal rights of Mennonite schools with Russian schools. The Mennonites felt this was a most important point for their future existence.

General von Totleben had suggested that the Mennonites should ask their local authorities practical questions that would arise regarding the administration of their program, shortly before the conscription law went into effect. For this purpose a general meeting was held in Halbstadt. A resolution was drawn up by this meeting on November 9, 1878, which provided that each community send its own delegation to its district government to clarify administrative questions, and that these delegates should then meet from time to time to compare notes. The questions to be clarified were:

1. The establishment of special Mennonite conscription districts.
2. The character of the oath of service.
3. Questions concerning the care of Mennonite draftees in spiritual and church disciplinary matters.

The different delegates sent out for this purpose reported a courteous reception by district authorities. The questions the latter could

not answer they promised to refer to higher authorities. The trouble was that there were too many such referred questions.

In the meantime General von Totleben had been made governor-general at Odessa. He was thus now the supreme authority in the provinces occupied by the Mennonites. The Mennonites accordingly decided to send a delegation[18] to him to seek clarity on certain points and to request:

1. Absolute freedom from any military contact, i.e., the Department of War.
2. Use of Mennonite spiritual advisors in the camps, who would have the freedom of exercising church discipline among serving youths.
3. Arrangement for special conscription districts free and separate from regular military districts.
4. Exemption from police service necessitating the use of force.
5. Help in reorganizing the school system in the Molotschna, Andreas Voth, president of the school board to act as emissary for this project.

General von Totleben received this delegation on June 20, 1879. He did not read their petition in their presence, but to their verbal question regarding special recruiting districts for Mennonites he gave a negative answer. He advised them to be satisfied with the concessions already made in their favor, and promised to see to their interests personally in St. Petersburg. He assured them they could have their own preachers in the barracks. In November, 1879, Baron von Ungern-Sternberg, son-in-law of General von Totleben, arrived in Halbstadt as his father-in-law's emissary, and requested the Mennonites to present a working plan for the forestation project. A meeting was called for this purpose on November 19, 1879, in the Alexanderwohl Church. No lay members were present officially. Since it had been decided to accept the forestry service, it was necessary to choose men who had experience in this type of work, and who were consequently able to organize it.[19] These men were to meet at the invitation of the two Molotschna district chairmen, who acted in the capacity of sponsors for the project. In regard to church schools it was recognized they presented the strongest single institution to keep alive the Mennonite faith and ideals.[20] It was resolved to:

18 Members of this delegation were Johann Töws, and Johann Wiebe, bishops of the Samara district and preachers, Heinrich Unruh and Bernhard Harder.

19 Commission members were: Johann Cornies, Peter Fast, Daniel Unger, from Taschenak, Blumenort, and Waldheim respectively. Note that only the Molotschna colonies were represented at this meeting. Later on Abraham Görz was added to this commission.

20 It is interesting to take note of a similar trend under similar circumstances in our own day among the Mennonites of America.

1. Arouse the church membership to an appreciation and an understanding of the school system, and
2. To do away with present dissension regarding schools.

The commission on the forestation plans drew up the following recommendations:

1. If it should appear desirable to the government that the Mennonite boys be divided into the minimum number of groups for the purpose of laying out plantations for the forestation of territories of South Russia, we would accept this permission of group concentration with the greatest thanks, for it would make possible to us the provision of necessary spiritual care for our boys.
2. If it should not be possible to place all boys immediately on plantations, the overflow could, for the time being, perhaps, be sent to the nearest crown forests in the Tauridia and Cherson governmental districts.
3. On these projected plantations are to serve also those boys who would prefer to effect their service in workshops by means of smithies and wheelwright shops, which would produce necessary cultivation instruments and also German wagons, and other implements for the crown.
4. It would be desirable that artisans be chosen from the colonies to supervise these workshops.
5. According to the present census, and according to the present basis of the conscription, the Mennonites of Russia would have to induct about a hundred men annually to serve as overseers, secretaries, bookkeepers, etc.

A special delegation was now appointed to present the Commission's report, which is cited above, personally to General von Totleben.[21] The three deputies arrived in Odessa on Friday, December 14, 1879. General von Totleben commended them on their work, saying that it was exactly what he had had in mind when he requested a working plan. He promised to have the recommendations copied and sent to St. Petersburg with his son-in-law. Later, he himself would go. He closed with the remark that in his opinion forestry service was the best solution of the Mennonite problem.

In June, 1880, Privy Councillor Bark arrived as emissary of the Ministry of Imperial Domains. He had received unrestricted authority to help the Mennonites regulate their service problems. To an assemblage of Mennonite bishops at Gnadenfeld, on June 22, 1880, he reported that his ministry was ready to use Mennonite boys in the forestation project, provided the Mennonites would provide the barracks, clothing, and food. In return, the government would pay each man twenty kopecks, or a little less than ten cents a day for their labor. If the Mennonites agreed to this they could divide the

[21] This deputation consisted of Bernhard Harder of Halbstadt, Heinrich Epp of Chortitza, and Peter Fast of Blumenort.

boys into six groups, for which over a period of three years, six barracks were to be built. If this did not suit the Mennonites, they could send their boys to more remote forests and divide them into smaller groups. The councillor reported that this project had been placed before the emperor, and that the latter had said, "My Mennonites will do this for their children." Two of the six barracks were to be in the district of Tauridia, two in the district of Jekaterinoslav, and two in Cherson.[22] On June 25, 1880, this report of the privy councillor was presented in the community church in Halbstadt to assembled delegates. A question raised here, in the presence of Councillor Bark, dealt with the possibility of having to build new barracks every time the government decided to move commands to other reservations. The councillor suggested that the Mennonites write a provision into the final agreement which would secure the location of a barracks for a period of twenty years. The government was to pay indemnity if commands were removed to new locations before that time had expired. Thus reassured, the agreement with the government received its final form and was signed on September 19, 1880. The provisions follow here:

1. Upon the invitation of Councillor Bark, we have gathered here on this day in the Halbstadt courthouse, and have heard the remarks of the councillor to the effect that the ministries of War and Interior find it impossible to grant special conscription depots for Mennonites in Chortitza and Halbstadt.

2. With special thankfulness we heard that those Mennonite recruits conscripted in 1880 will not need to appear for induction in December of this year, but will be allowed to appear at the latest, April 1, 1881.

3. Upon the question of the Ministry of Imperial Domains regarding the locality from which the bishops and their assistants would be chosen for the supervision of the forestry service, and if the Mennonites were figuring on State support of these officials, we declare that such persons shall be chosen by the churches and shall be supported by them.

4. Upon the question of the Ministry, to whom the necessary materials for the building of the barracks should be sent, we declare that a special person shall be chosen to receive these, and that we shall be held responsible for any occurring wastage and loss to the crown.

5. In answer to the question of Councillor Bark, whether the Mennonites would not supply horses at a certain day-wage scale, we declare to this that if the government will provide two hundred dessiatines[23] necessary for

22 In 1881 the camps for the Anodol and Asow commands were built. These constituted the two camps needed in the Jekaterinoslav district. In 1882 camps were finished in Wladimir and Razyn for the Cherson territory, and in 1883 camps at Neu-Berdjansk and Alt-Berdjansk were completed for the Tauridia locations. The total cost of these was around 165,000 rubles ($84,150).

23 One Russian Dessiatine equals 2.7 acres.

the feeding of the horses at about ⅓ of the usual rental, we will gladly provide the horses that are needed (details for horse-land rental continue).

6. In addition, we declare that although the forestation commands are designated as mobile, the main purpose of our requests and sacrifices is to keep the boys under our supervision and unified in permanent groups. For this reason, we plead humbly that if it should prove necessary to order a part of the Mennonite laborers to leave the central forestry station, these orders be of short duration, and do not take the boy from the district in which the station is located, and that the boys chosen for more remote work be chosen after counselling with the Mennonite bishop.

7. The rights of the Molotschna Mennonite School Board are not yet formally determined, neither has the teachers' course, which has been introduced by the Halbstadt Central School, been endorsed. In order that the Mennonite recruits may enjoy the lawful liberties in regard to education, we request humbly that the Ministry of Imperial Domains hasten the drawing up of instructions for the school board, and confirm the proposed course of study. In conjunction with this we request, humbly, that the youths shall enjoy all the liberties regarding education,[24] and have the right to defer the completion of the teachers' course.

8. And lastly we request, humbly, that discharge of our boys, for shorter or longer periods, be made as easy for them as possible.

Thus it came about that the Mennonites of Russia succeeded in the endeavor to secure from their government a branch of service entirely outside of the jurisdiction of the army. The prospect of having to serve even in the Navy Department's workshops on non-military projects, or in the Red Cross, which in time of war would necessarily work with the army, was averted by the direct influence of the Czar through his special emissary, General von Totleben. Total emigration for conscience' sake had been side-tracked by the government through compromise. The Mennonites had won a respite at a price. The cost of supporting their boys in these privileged camps soon grew to be far greater than they had anticipated, but no price was too great which kept their faith intact.

In 1881 the first forestry camps were opened at Anodol and Azov, in the governmental district of Jekaterinoslav. One hundred and twenty-three boys were registered here. In 1914, there were 1,139 boys in nine forestation camps.[25] The complete cost to Mennonites, of operating these camps in 1914, was approximately 500,000 rubles ($255,000). The camps were under the supervision of the head

[24] The Russian Army gave special consideration and privileges to personnel who had academic training. A young man with high school training served only three out of the regulation four years of service. A junior college graduate served only two years.

[25] This figure is based on correspondence of C. F. Klassen, secretary-treasurer of the Mennonite Central Relief Committee of Canada, with H. S. Bender, dated February 2, 1941.

forester of the district. Each camp made up a closed unit; the boys wore uniforms and were subject to military discipline. The financial upkeep of these camps was the great problem of the churches. They had to provide for the building, upkeep, lighting, and heating of the barracks. In addition, they had to feed and clothe the men, and also provide for the needs of the sick. They paid for the support of the spiritual advisor, of which each camp had one. The government as its part paid each man ten cents a day, provided medical care, farm implements, and tools for the workshops.

To administer their part of the project the Mennonites set up a special forestry council at whose head was a president. This man had absolute authority, other council members merely acting in advisory capacity. The whole organization was in the control of the clergy in the beginning, but democratic adjustments took place from time to time. The early meetings regarding forestry affairs were of a synodical character, but later laymen entered the meetings.[26]

During the next twenty-five years from 1872 on, the problems resulting from the organization of the forestry service brought the Mennonites closer together. In matters relating to the state they had learned the lesson of unity and acted as a unit. This gradually had its influence in other respects. In 1893, e.g., this new feeling of unity resulted in the publication of a general hymnal. In 1898 a general confession of faith for all Mennonites in Russia was agreed upon. Hospitals and asylums for the aged and physically unfit became a reality because of this unity.

The problem of meeting the rising cost of maintenance of camps was the most difficult of all. Since the Mennonites had no legal power to collect taxes, voluntary property tax contributions were requested.[27] Each individual, however, remained his own appraiser, although attempts were made to indicate what each person should give. A definite property tax soon appeared to be a necessity, especially after a deficit of 41,000 rubles ($20,000) appeared on the books. The person in charge of collections of back taxes was finally forced to seek legal sanction for forced collection. This permission

[26] During the days of the Kerensky government the men in service received a voice in formulation of service policies. Another democratic trend was the decision to let women vote in regular church meetings. Ehrt likes to link this shift to popular control of church matters with the new Russian political emphasis on democratic processes in governmental affairs. He is probably right.

[27] Voluntary contributions were supplanted by a poll tax which operated until 1905. After 1905 a property tax was in force.

was given by means of a special decree by the Czar, September 25, 1913. During the war year of 1917 the cost of maintaining the camps rose to $1,326,000. When one considers that there were only 35,379 Mennonites capable of earning this money, it becomes apparent what a sacrifice this was.

III

The World War of 1914-1918 rocked the Russian Mennonites out of their peaceful existence once more. With the establishment of the forestry service they had assumed that all their difficulties with the state had been forever settled. This proved to be an illusion. At the outbreak of the war the Mennonite privileges immediately aroused the jealousy of those Russian neighbors whose sons had to heed the call of mobilization. To offset this antagonism toward them, Mennonite boys volunteered for sanitary work, and Mennonite farmers helped their Russian neighbors harvest their crops. The more simple-minded Russian, however, imagined this Good Samaritan help to be a blind for spy work. That the Mennonites were German in origin was not to be denied, and moreover they still considered German to be their native tongue. These sparks of suspicion were fanned by reputable Russian newspapers until they finally spread to Russian officialdom. Special prayer-meetings showed the concern of the Mennonites over these gathering clouds. They asked for grace to meet the coming trials.

On May 1, 1914, the Mennonite executive of the Forestry Service told the representatives of the colonies, assembled in Halbstadt, that he had received a telegram from the government director of the Forestry Service in St. Petersburg, in which he was asked to come to the capital for a talk about the service of Mennonite reservists. In July of the same year, a delegation was chosen to clarify this question with the Forestry Department. The result of the meeting was that freedom from bearing arms was to be continued, but Mennonite boys were to be mobilized on the same basis as regular citizens, and were to be used in the Forestry and the Sanitary Service or any other Service in which there was no question of bearing arms. The acceptance of Sanitary Service was a new development in Mennonite State Service. It was a departure from the extreme isolationism as expressed by the Forestry Service, and it brought the Mennonite boys more or less directly in contact with the humanitarian branch of the war machine. In 1916, 4,988 of a total of 11,536 Mennonite boys

were in the Sanitary Service.[28] In the previous year there had been 5,400. Of these, 3,363 worked under the auspices of the All-Russian Provincial Society,[29] 1,000 worked in the Red Cross, 345 worked for organizations of the nobility, and 280 in private or state hospitals.[30] In the regular forestry service during the same period there were 6,548 boys.

In Moscow, which was the general headquarters of the All-Russian Provincial Society, a large group of Mennonites worked in their own buildings, civilian and military hospitals. In Dnieperpetrovsk, then the G.H.Q. of the Southern Red Cross, a Mennonite headed the whole department. The hospital trains, sometimes manned exclusively by Mennonites, went to the foremost front positions to gather the wounded, and brought them to central Russia. Mennonite physicians often had posts of responsibility in this service. In the Caucasus region of operations, a whole ambulance corps was composed of Mennonites. Because of their honesty, (a characteristic for which Russian officialdom from the time of Tolstoi has never been praised) Mennonites were intrusted with huge sums of money, and were sent out to make purchases for the Red Cross.

The history of Mennonite State Service in Russia is one of loyalty and devoton of a Christian people to their fatherland. This loyalty and devotion was often recognized, but as the war progressed the government came into the hands of unscrupulous men. The liquidation laws[31] of 1915 and 1916 were a manifestation of this. Those Mennonite boys serving in isolated forest regions of the north were often neglected and some died of exposure and undernourishment because the government failed to send supplies. The excuse was that the transport was needed for services at the front. Mennonite preachers at the camps had to do the same work as the regular recruits. In the regular army, the chaplains were not required to do this.

To remedy some of those defects a deputation was sent from

28 Figures from Karl Lindeman—*Von den deutschen Kolonisten in Russland, Ergebnisse einer Studienreise. Schriften des deutschen Ausland-Instituts*, Band 13 und 14. Stuttgart: Ausland und Heimat Verlag-Aktiengesellschaft, 1924, 123 pp.

29 The Russian Red Cross could not handle all the work of this nature, so it chartered humanitarian organizations to assist it, such as the All-Russian Semstwo-Society.

30 These figures are for 1912.

31 A series of confiscatory laws which would eventually have taken the land away from the Mennonites. These laws were nullified by the provisional government of Kerensky in 1918.

Halbstadt in January, 1917, to get the following concessions from the government:

1. All young men in the Forestry Service to be transferred to the Sanitary Service, for here they received clothing and board from the Red Cross.[32]
2. The government should support families dependent on men in the service in like measure as the government now took care of other nationalities within its borders.
3. Travelling expenses of men in Sanitary Service to be paid by the government.
4. To cancel the effects of the new "liquidation laws" in regard to Mennonite property.

Almost all of these requests were denied by the government.

The financial problem of State Service was now becoming desperate. The committee in charge of collections of taxes found it necessary to hold a general meeting in Halbstadt in May, 1917. It was made plain here that the committee was finding it difficult to raise the necessary money to finance the expanded program. Fathers of men in service argued they did not feel obliged to pay extra taxes when they supported their own boys heavily out of their own pockets. They pointed out that the government should pay all expenses of those engaged in Sanitary Service. The wives of men in service complained they were unable to pay taxes to support their husbands because there was no one to work the farms. They demanded their husbands back. Others from the Melitopol region pointed out that the "liquidation laws" had already begun to take effect in their district, and without their land they could not hope to pay the service taxes.

In August, 1917, the government control over civilians and army was already so weak that a general conference of Mennonite churches, together with the representatives of the Forestry Service, met in Halbstadt to cope with the problem of protection against plundering peasant banditry. A committee was chosen which had full authority to disband the forestry commands. It was these demobilized boys who formed the nucleus of the ill-starred *Selbstschutz* (self-protection) army.

At this point the history of State Service ends. It is a history of an honest endeavor by a Christian people to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

[32] This was partly an endeavor to relieve the financial burden of the service at this time.

LEUPOLD SCHARNSCHLAGER, † 1563

Swiss Anabaptist Elder and Hymn Writer

GERHARD HEIN

Among the inner circle of Anabaptist leaders who gathered around Pilgram Marpeck, one of the most prominent was Leupold Scharnschlager. Like Marpeck, Scharnschlager was a Tyrolean, at one time owner of land at Hopfgarten near Kitzbüchel. More is known about the ancestors of Scharnschlager's wife, Anna, than about himself. She must have belonged to a prominent family; her father, Conrad Honigler, came from Hall in Tirol, while her mother, Margaret Rieper, came from Gossensass at the south entrance of the Brenner pass. A brother of her mother, Dr. Johannes Rieper, was dean of the cathedral in Brixen, and other relatives were also among the clergy. Anna's sister, Veronica, was married to Hans Steger, a lawyer and later administrator in Kitzbüchel; and Anna herself in her first marriage had been married to Gallus Steger, a brother of Hans Steger, after whose death she married Scharnschlager. Anna had at least one child, a daughter named Ursula, although it is not known whether she was a child of the first or the second marriage.[1]

The first authentic information of Scharnschlager reports that about 1530 he was compelled to leave his home with wife and daughter, since he had joined the Anabaptists. His property was confiscated by the government in March, 1531.[2] Until recently it was unknown whither the family fled, although Moravia had been earlier supposed to be the place of refuge.[3] New evidence shows, however, that they went direct to Strasburg, probably in response to a suggestion of their friend and exiled fellow countryman, Pilgram Marpeck, for in the years 1530 to 1533 Scharnschlager lived and labored at that place.

1 T. Schiess, "Aus dem Leben eines eines Ilanzer Schulmeisters," in *Beiträge zur Geschichte St. Gallens und der Ostschweiz,* St. Gallen, 1932, p. 230. (Also *Bündner Monatsblatt* 1916, No. 3, pp. 73-89.)

2 J. Loserth, *Der Anabaptismus in Tirol,* I, (*Archiv für österreichische Geschichte* 78, (Wien) 1892, p. 500, Note 2.

3 Schiess, *op. cit.,* p. 235. J. Ten Doornkaat Koolman, "Leupold Scharnschlager und die verborgene Täufergemeinde in Graubünden," *Zwingliana,* IV, Zurich, 1926, p. 330. Also the same author, article on "Graubünden," *Mennonitisches Lexikon,* Weierhof-Frankfurt, 1913 ff, I, p. 157.

Scharnschlager's missionary activity extended as far as Speyer, for we learn that as early as 1530 he had baptized there a certain Kaspar Schuhmacher who later apostatized from the Anabaptist faith. In connection with the Schuhmacher case Scharnschlager addressed to the Anabaptist leader, Michael Leubel,[4] at the end of the year 1532, an epistle containing an exposition of the doctrines of baptism and original sin which later appears in substance in the writings of Pilgram Marpeck in the years 1542 to 1546, in which Scharnschlager himself also collaborated. The records show that two Anabaptists expelled from Speyer, Hans and Margaret, both domestics, went in and out of Scharnschlager's house at Strasburg. In 1532 at Christmas time a citizen of Speyer by the name of Thomas Adolf visited him, seeking baptism from either him or Pilgram Marpeck. However, since Marpeck had been expelled from Strasburg by the city council a year before, and Scharnschlager had received advice from the church in Moravia to "wait with baptism until further notice," Thomas Adolf did not secure the baptism he desired. Instead, he returned to Speyer bringing with him the letter from Scharnschlager to Michael Leubel, which is to be found in the Speyer Archives in two forms, an original and a copy.[5] From the testimony of this Thomas Adolf, given in Speyer in a hearing before the court on January 8, 1533, it is clear that Leupold Scharnschlager of Strasburg is identical with Leupold Seifensieder (soapmaker) who is named by Melchior Hoffman in a court hearing on May 29, 1533, as his opponent, "who is opposed to him in the main points."[6] Whether Scharnschlager ever followed soapmaking as an occupation is unknown. Thomas Adolf had "not seen him carry on his trade."

Scharnschlager's daughter Ursula was married in Strasburg about 1533 to a clockmaker by name of Hans Felix, who is mentioned by Scharnschlager in his letter to Michael Leubel, and from whom he sends greetings as from "Hans the clockmaker" who had visited Leubel in Tirol "in times past." Shortly after this time the young couple must have gone to Moravia, for Ursula's mother writes about 1535 to her brother, that her daughter had married a clockmaker two years before, and was at that time in Moravia. From a

[4] See the article on Michael Leubel in *Menn. Lexikon*, II, p. 642; also Gerhard Hein, "Täufer in Speyer," in (*Festschrift für D. Chr. Neff*) Beitrige zur Mennonitischen Geschichte, Frankfort a.u., 1938, pp. 48-66.

[5] To be found in the *Speyer Stadtarchiv*, fasc. 492.

[6] T. W. Röhrich, *"Zur Geschichte der Strassburger Wiedertäufer,"* in *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie*, 1860, p. 71.

letter of the son-in-law, dated at Austerlitz, October 28, 29, 1538, it is clear that he had "come to faith" and to his Anabaptist convictions through Leupold Scharnschlager, probably in Strasburg.[7]

It is uncertain whether Scharnschlager was still in Strasburg as late in 1535, although Pilgram Marpeck seems to have transmitted letters to him. Hans Felix, in his letter of 1538, refers twice to the fact that his parents-in-law were staying "up" at the place where he had formerly lived and before he had come to Moravia and where they were no longer permitted to stay. It is possible that he meant Strasburg by this comment, although Schiess suspects Tirol, and Doornkaat Koolman thinks it refers to upper Germany in general. In the following years it is probable that he was associated closely with Marpeck and was located in the region where Marpeck was usually to be found, chiefly Augsburg.

There is strong probability that Scharnschlager was co-author with Marpeck of the *Vermahnung* which was published in 1542. The book itself names as authors and publishers "Die christgläubigen Bundes- und Mitgenossen des Trübsals, das in Christo ist."[8] Pilgram Marpeck was certainly the chief author, but Caspar Schwenckfeld at one place speaks of two writers and without doubt has in mind Scharnschlager as the second writer, since at another place he claims that "he did not have so much to do with Scharnschlager as with Pilgram."[9] Scharnschlager is also mentioned as the co-author with Marpeck of the *Verantwortung,* the first part of which was finished in 1544 and the second part in 1546.[10] The striking concordance of the teachings on baptism and original sin found in these two writings (*Vermahnung* and *Verantwortung*) with the ideas on these doctrines contained in the Scharnschlager letter of 1532, make it more than probable that Scharnschlager was a prominent participant in the composition of both.[11] Prominent in these teachings are two points of doctrine: first, the doctrine also held by Luther, that in baptism the inner reality must not be separated from the outer form; and second, the specific concept, that children, before they come to the age of accountability, have no sin except original sin

[7] Schiess, *op. cit.,* p. 237.

[8] *Gedenkschrift zum 400 jährigen Jubiläum der Mennoniten,* Ludwigshafen a. Rh., 1925, p. 180.

[9] *J. Loserth, Pilgram Marpecks Antwort auf K. Schwenckfelds Beurteilung des Buches der Bundesbezeugung von 1542,* Vienna and Leipzig, 1929, pp. 57, 176.

[10] *Ibid.,* p. 50.

[11] See the more thorough discussion in Hein, "Taufer in Speyer," *op. cit.*

"which does not have any affect on their salvation until it expresses itself in actual sin, wherefore baptism is not ordained for them." The *Verantwortung* at this point bases its discussion on an otherwise unknown "article" of the Moravian brethren concerning which Scharnschlager may have had knowledge through his son-in-law, who was at that time living in Moravia.[12] Whether Scharnschlager himself lived for a time in Moravia is unknown.

From the year 1546 on we find Scharnschlager with his wife at Ilanz in the canton of the Grisons in inner East Switzerland. No doubt they were compelled to flee from Bavaria where, according to a letter of the wife, they had to pay a fine of forty gulden. For almost two decades they were permitted to live undisturbed at Ilanz. Scharnschlager exercised his talent as teacher of the youth of Ilanz, and his wife Anna re-established connections with her Tirolean homeland and tried to recover possession of her former property. Occasionally she visited her son-in-law who had come to Ilanz for a time, during which time he repaired the village clock, and *"bietzte,"* according to one witness. The connection with Moravia and upper Germany were maintained and Scharnschlager continued to serve the brethren with his talent. From a letter of Valtin Werner, a younger co-author of the *Verantwortung,* dated at Augsburg, August 26, 1559, it appears that Scharnschlager at that time served as leader of a secret Anabaptist congregation in the Grisons. The letter by Werner, which has been preserved with the Zurich manuscript of the *Verantwortung,* refers to the "great labor and work" which Scharnschlager had, particularly in making a copy of the *Verantwortung,* and mentions further a writing by Scharnschlager entitled *Vom Gericht,* for which the brethren in Augsburg were now sending him their testimony of approval. The letter has a particularly fine sentence referring to the relation of Scharnschlager to the brotherhood at large, which reads as follows: "Wilt thou receive them (the testimonies) also in the love of Christ, for the sake of which love we hope thou wilt continue to serve us in this and other things, and to be a father to us with the rich treasure which the Lord has entrusted to thee, wherever it is necessary and love leads you to serve, although we do not wish to burden you in your honorable old age." The German reads as follows at this point: "Wollest sy also in der lieb christi auf- und annemen, umb welcher lieb willen du

[12] *Ibid.,* p. 268.

uns in dem und anderem weiter dienen und als ein vater vorstan, mit dem schatz und reichthumb, so dir vom herren vertraut ist, wo es die notturft erheischt und dich die lieb treibt, sonst deinem ehrlichen alter vil aufzeladen, ist nit unser mainung."[13]

The regard with which Scharnschlager was held not only by the Augsburg brethren but elsewhere even after his death, is evident from an epistle of Wernhard Riepl, dated at Klein-Teschau, February 15, 1571, which has been preserved in the Olmütz manuscript of the *Verantwortung.* Riepl reports concerning strife which had arisen between the brethren Adam and Uhrmacher and others "concerning the Holy Scriptures and the dead letter, through which spirit and life come." Riepl had summoned to a conference a number of brethren, and laid before them a writing of Scharnschlager which was to cast light on the dispute at issue. The writing was a so-called *Unterscheid,* although it is not clear what was meant by this title. It may refer to the well-known *Testamentserläuterung . . . zu dienst und fürderung ains klaren urteils von wegen underschaid Alts und News Testaments.*[14] If this is the case, the anonymous "Buchmacher" or author of this writing which is so often quoted in the *Verantwortung* can be identified as Scharnschlager.

The Swiss Brethren hymnal, the *Ausbund,* contains a hymn by Leupold Scharnschlager, No. 57. It is a hymn in praise of love in seven verses, following I Cor. 13.

Scharnschlager died in March, 1563, at Ilanz. His wife survived him for a time, but was ailing. We know that she sent a messenger to her daughter, who was, after the death of her clockmaker husband, married to a certain weaver named Stoffel Krieger. Through the messenger the ailing mother requested her daughter, together with her husband, to come to her at Ilanz to care for her in her last days and to take possession of the inheritance. However, she never saw her daughter again, for the mother died in the same year, and the daughter died soon thereafter in Moravia. The rather extensive inheritance was granted by the court at Ilanz to the grandchildren of Scharnschlager in a judgment of March, 1566. The court action regarding the inheritance which was occasioned by the fraudulent claims of a certain Zimmerman, is responsible for preserving many details concerning Scharnschlager and his life which might otherwise not have been preserved.

[13] J. Ten Doornkaat Koolman, *op. cit.,* p. 335.
[14] Loserth, *op. cit.,* pp. 35, 579 ff.

Without doubt, next to Marpeck, Leupold Scharnschlager was one of the most talented leaders of the Swiss Brethren in his time, although persecution drove him into a concealment with many years of hidden activity which contributed to the ultimate loss of his name and fame from the memory of his own Anabaptist (Mennonite) group as well as the larger Christian fellowship.

[Editor's Note: A brief article on Scharnschlager was published by Gerhard Hein in the *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* (Frankfurt A. M., Germany) in August, 1939 (Jahrgang 4, Nr. 1, pp. 6-12) under the title "Leupold Scharnschlager, Ein Mitarbeiter Pilgram Marbecks." Appended to the brief three-page biography are three important documents: (1) A letter of Scharnschlager to Michael Leubel (1532); (2) A letter of Scharnschlager to the brethren in Moravia (after 1546); (3) A hymn by Scharnschlager entitled "Von der Liebe." The letter of Valentin Werner to Scharnschlager, dated August 26, 1559, was published by J. ten Doornkaat Koolman in "Leupold Scharnschlager und die verborgene Täufergemeinde in Graubünden" in *Zwingliana*, 1926, IV, pp. 329 f.]

BOOK REVIEWS

The Christian Attitude toward War. By LORAINE BOETTNER. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1940. Pp. 119. $1.00.

The two outstanding arguments of this book seem to be: 1. Objection to war is identified with modern religious liberalism. 2. The Scriptures do not teach that war is wrong, but rather the opposite. On page 83 the author says:

> Almost invariably the Christian pacifist turns out to be a modernist in the Church. He laughs at the Christian doctrine of the sovereignty of God and the sinfulness of man. . . . He repudiates the divine Christ, reduces Jesus to a mere moral teacher and good example, and denies or ignores the consequences of sin. He calls for a shorter Bible, and expects the kingdom of God to be established on earth largely through such things as social legislation, education and disarmament conferences.

The reviewer knows of no complete analysis of religious objectors as to their various shades of theological difference, but if Mr. Boettner had used the statistics which are available he could have saved himself from the above-quoted error. According to the War Department about ninety per cent of all conscientious objectors in the first World War were religious objectors. Lieutenant May, using these statistics, concludes that fully seventy-five per cent of all conscientious objectors of that war were "religious literalists," which presumably means a literal acceptance of the Bible and its teachings. This statement is reinforced by the fact that of 359 conscientious objectors court martialed in the World War, thirty-eight per cent were Mennonites while such churches as the Dunkard, the Church of God, the Pentecostal and other "literalist" groups together contributed about an equal percentage. Moreover, in the present war forty per cent of all conscientious objectors in Civilian Public Service camps are Mennonites, with various other "literalist" groups together contributing a sizeable number of objectors. The classification of objectors in the present war is therefore very similar to that of the last.

The reviewer would not wish to be understood as indorsing in detail the theological views of all these groups, but certainly the statistics constitute a complete denial of Boettner's statement that "almost invariably the Christian pacifist turns out to be a modernist." This statement completely ignores the Mennonites who contribute forty per cent of all conscientious objectors in the United States. In fact Mr. Boettner's book omits all reference to the Mennonites who are the oldest nonresistant group in America today and who, judging from the proportion of objectors which come from their ranks, are also one of the most virile nonresistant groups. No one acquainted with this leading nonresistant group would make the mistake of classifying it as modernist. Even Calvinism has never asserted more positively its belief in the sinfulness of man and his need of salvation through the redemptive work of Christ than has Mennonitism. So far from reducing "Jesus to a mere moral teacher," no group has been more persistent than the Mennonites in its assertion of the deity of Christ. As to the "shorter Bible" it should be sufficient to remind our author that in certain intellectual circles the Mennonites have often been referred to as those sim-

ple-minded folks who take at face value whatever they read in the Bible. And finally, anyone who understands the emphasis on separation from the world and the reluctance to participate in social and political activities which has characterized the Mennonites through 400 years of history will recognize at once that they cannot be counted among those who expect the kingdom of God to be established through education and social legislation. In fact one of the ablest critiques of modernism in recent decades is the well-known work of the late John Horsch, *Modern Religious Liberalism.* Horsch was a leading Mennonite historian and theologian and also the author of an outstanding pamphlet on nonresistance. The reviewer would not deny, of course, that a few Mennonites have been influenced by modernist doctrine. But if his own observation has not gone astray, it may safely be said that in the majority of cases acceptance of modernist doctrine among Mennonites, when it has occurred, has resulted in a weakening of their nonresistant faith. After all, the modernist-pacifists constitute the minority within American pacifism. While this group has able leaders, its following is not commensurate with its vocalism. The great body of religious objectors are a group of simple believers who may have few brilliant spokesmen, but who are nevertheless ready to endure persecution rather than to renounce their faith.

In developing his second point, that the Scriptures approve warfare for the Christian, Mr. Boettner leans rather heavily on the Old Testament. He refers to various military incidents in the history of Israel and then cites Romans 13 to show the divinely instituted character of civil government and declares that the New Testament contains no direct teaching on war. "The silence of the New Testament on the subject of war," he says, "apparently rests on the assumption that the Old Testament teaching was sufficiently explicit and did not call for any addition or modification" (p. 27). This emphasis on the Old Testament brings out an important difference between Calvinist and Mennonite theology. The reviewer, following Mennonite theology, would hold that in the New Testament the civil code of Moses (not the Ten Commandments, etc.) has been superseded by the Sermon on the Mount and kindred teachings. He would hold that the Mosaic civil code represents an ethical level below that of God's fundamental moral law as given in the Ten Commandments. During the Old Testament dispensation God tolerated this lower moral level, but under the new covenant the Mosaic civil code has been set aside; and through Christ His disciples are asked to fulfill the higher moral law. The reviewer is also unable to see how such specific commands as "love your enemies" can make it possible to hold that the New Testament is silent on the question of war. Surely warfare is quite out of harmony with the whole tenor of the New Testament; and the best exegesis of the "love your enemy" passage in the Sermon on the Mount would hold that its meaning includes national as well as personal enemies. Again, in order to understand the meaning of Romans 13 it is well to remember that the Christians to whom Paul was writing were not liable for military service. There were numerous revolutionary movements in the empire, however; and if the Christians to whom Paul wrote were tempted to engage in military activity at all it is likely that they were tempted to engage in rebellion against the emperor rather than in service in his army. Therefore Paul's admonition to be loyal to Caesar is a warning not to engage in rebellion. This makes it an admonition to be nonresistant, not an admonition to perform military service as this passage is sometimes interpreted. Obviously this question

requires a fuller discussion than is possible in a brief book review. Elsewhere in this issue of the REVIEW the reviewer has an article on "Peace and War in the Old Testament" in which he presents the above point of view at greater length.

Goshen College Guy F. Hershberger.

The Anabaptists, Their Contribution To Our Protestant Heritage. By R. J. SMITHSON, PH.D. London, James Clarke & Co., 1935, 227 pp.

This excellent treatise represents (in 1935) the first general work on the Anabaptists in any language for more than thirty years. Last previous English publications were those by Richard Heath (1895), E. Belfort Bax (1903), and E. C. Pike (1904). The notable difference between Smithson's book and the earlier works reveals strikingly the progress made in Anabaptist historiography in the generation previous to 1935, for Smithson has availed himself of the results of the latest research and presents a thoroughly sound interpretation of the Anabaptist movement. It is a far cry from a Richard Heath who writes of "Anabaptism—From its rise at Zwickau to its Fall at Münster" to a Smithson who dissociates Anabaptism completely from Zwickau, sets its origin at Zurich in 1525, and excludes Münster altogether from "genuine" Anabaptism. That he was able to do so is due largely to the research of such men as John Horsch and his publications in the MENNONITE QUARTERLY REVIEW, whom the author has generously recognized in his introduction, for we take it that Dr. Smithson did not undertake independent research in the original sources himself, but rather set himself to the task of assembling and interpreting the results of the research of those working directly in the sources.

The plan of the book is best indicated by listing the chapter headings. I. Approach to the Subject, 7 pp., II. The Roots of the Anabaptist Movement, 17 pp., III. Anabaptism in Switzerland, 21 pp., IV. Anabaptism in South Germany, Austria and Moravia, The Hutterian Brethren, 24 pp., V. Anabaptism in the Netherlands, 14 pp., VI. The Münster Tragedy, 19 pp., VII. The Character and Principles of the Anabaptists, 28 pp., VIII. Representative Leaders, 27 pp., IX. The Attitude of Leading Reformers to the Anabaptists, 24 pp., X. Anabaptism in England, 13 pp., XI. The Relation of Anabaptism to Modern Movements, 9 pp., XII. Appreciation, 5 pp., Literature, 7 pp., Index, 3 pp. It is evident from this outline that the book limits itself to the earliest years of Anabaptism going little beyond 1535 anywhere, and in no case enters into a detailed discussion. The total story of Anabaptism as such, excluding the biographies of leaders, is told in slightly more than one hundred pages. The avowed aim of the author is "to present the salient features" and "to give a general outline of this distinctive movement and to indicate the nature of its contribution to our heritage." This aim is well accomplished. Particularly effective are the discussions of the Hutterian Brethren and the Münster Tragedy.

In his general interpretation of the Anabaptist movement, whether in the matter of "roots," "character and principles," or "fruits," Dr. Smithson, is sound, well-balanced and true. It is refreshing to find not only such a clear and forthright rejection of the traditional confusion of evangelical and revolutionary Anabaptists, which only the most stupid of modern historians could continue to hold (it is still done!), but also the keen discrimination which puts a spiritist like Hans Denk outside the evangelical Anabaptist

circle. Interesting also is the clear statement of the process by which the revolutionary Anabaptists secured control of the city of Münster by *legal* means, i.e., by democratic election of members of the city council.

Dr. Smithson is sound in rejecting the theory of "Apostolic Succession" of Anabaptism so dear to the heart of Baptist historians of past generations. He might have strengthened his case by pointing out that all the known leaders of original Anabaptism were at one time Catholic, many of them priests and monks, and show no traces of any connection with Pre-Reformation groups or their literature. Dr. Smithson is not quite satisfying in dealing with the claims of Waldensian or mediaeval origin which he quotes from such men as T. M. Lindsay, Vedder, and Allen. None of these men were specialists in Anabaptist history, and all base their theories on general similarities of principle and ideas between Anabaptists and mediaeval groups. However, neither they nor anyone else has ever been able to produce specific evidence supporting any genetic connection such as claimed.

The discussion of the character and principles of the Anabaptists is on the whole good and true, although "freedom of conscience" and "mutual aid" should have been emphasized by discussion as separate principles. The treatment lacks somewhat however in theological and sociological depth. The organizing central concept of Anabaptism, that of "newness of life in following Christ" is not sharply brought out nor is there a clear differentiation from Lutheranism and Calvinism. Lutheranism emphasizes "justification," the experience of God's grace in forgiveness in the inner experience, whereas Anabaptism emphasizes "sanctification," that is, a transformation of life through obedience to Christ. *"Gnade"* is the great word for Luther, while *"Nachfolge Christi"* is the great word for the Anabaptists.

A few minor errors were noticed: Conrad Grebel's letter to Münzer is not at Schaffhausen, but at St. Gall (p. 40); Mayenfield was written for Maienfeld as Grebel's deathplace (p. 53); Hatzer should be Hätzer (p. 57); it is Colgate-Rochester Divinity School not Colchester-Rochester (p. 133), Hinwyl not Hinmyl (p. 142), and Rattenburg not Rottenburg (p. 154); it is doubtful that *"many* of the Anabaptist leaders were disciples of Erasmus," (p. 31), certainly none in the direct sense, and few even indirectly. The rejection of Mennonite influence on Baptist origins (p. 206) goes too far; the connection of the earliest Baptists with the Mennonites in Holland is proven beyond the shadow of doubt. The comparison of "Plymouth Brethren" principles with Anabaptist principles is interesting (pp. 210 ff.) but no attempt is made to prove a historical connection. It would have been more in order to trace possible connections between Anabaptism and Congregationalism. Michael Sattler should have been included among the biographies of representative leaders.

Dr. Smithson's book is good and deserves wide circulation. We apologize for the lateness of this review.

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